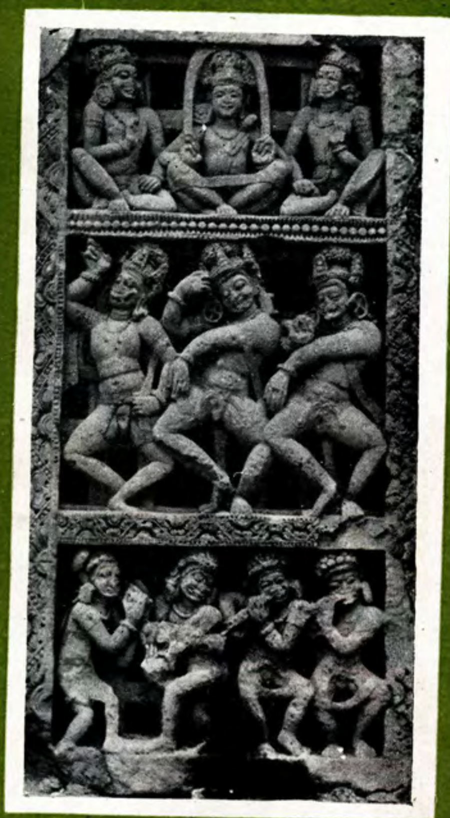
HISTORY OF THE ART OF ORISSA



CHARLES FABRI

ABOUT THE BOOK

THIS POSTHUMOUS publication bridges two major gaps in our understanding of the art heritage of Orissa. First, it is a pioneering attempt at presenting an art history of this region by organising scattered material into a sequential account, from the pre-Aryan archaic styles to the period from the 6th to the 14th century A.D. when temple architecture in Orissa blossomed into what the author considers to be the baroque and the rococo styles.

Secondly, much of our existing knowledge is confined to the well-known structures at Bhubaneswar, Konarak and Puri, all in the coastal region. This volume extends our knowledge inland and unearths part of the enormous but hidden art treasures of Orissa.

One of the major findings, whose under-current is evident all through this book, is that there was a period of about six centuries at the beginning of the Christian era during which almost all art in Orissa was of Buddhist origin. Through a stylistic interpretation of the changing architectural forms, the author reveals that many Buddhist shrines were gradually adapted to Hindu worship, until the first Brahmanic temple was built in Bhubaneswar in the 7th century.

For undertaking this project, the author had to do a great deal of archaeological reconnaissance work, which is also incorporated in this book.

Rs. 75·00

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CHARLES LOUIS FABRI (1899-1968), Hungarian by birth and British by citizenship, had made India his home since the thirties and devoted much of his life and work to the advancement of Indian art. He received his higher education, leading to a triple doctorate, in Holland, where he worked under Professor Vogel, the noted Indologist at Leyden University. He first visited the East in 1931 with Sir M. Aurel Stein on an archaeological expedition which took him to Persia, Turkey and Iran, besides India. In 1933 he was called by Rabindranath Tagore to teach art history at Santiniketan. Thereafter, his association with India became permanent, starting with his work at Mohenjodaro and Taxila under the Archaeological Survey of India.

Till 1948 Dr. Fabri was the Curator of the Lahore Central Museum, where a great deal of reorganisational work was undertaken under his inspiring leadership. From 1948 till his death he lived in Delhi, where he was the doyen of art and drama critic and played a pioneering role in the movement to recognise contemporary Indian art. He nurtured two generations of Indian painters, sculptors dancers, theatre workers and brought Amrita Shergil, Satish Gujral, Indrani Rehman, Yamini Krishnamurthy and many others to the attention of the public.

A man of profound learning and many interests, his was a wide-ranging involvement with the cultural life of India. He contributed over two hundred articles, monographs, broadcasts and lectures, besides being the author of six books. He knew about a dozen languages, European and Asian, and was altogether a most remarkable person.

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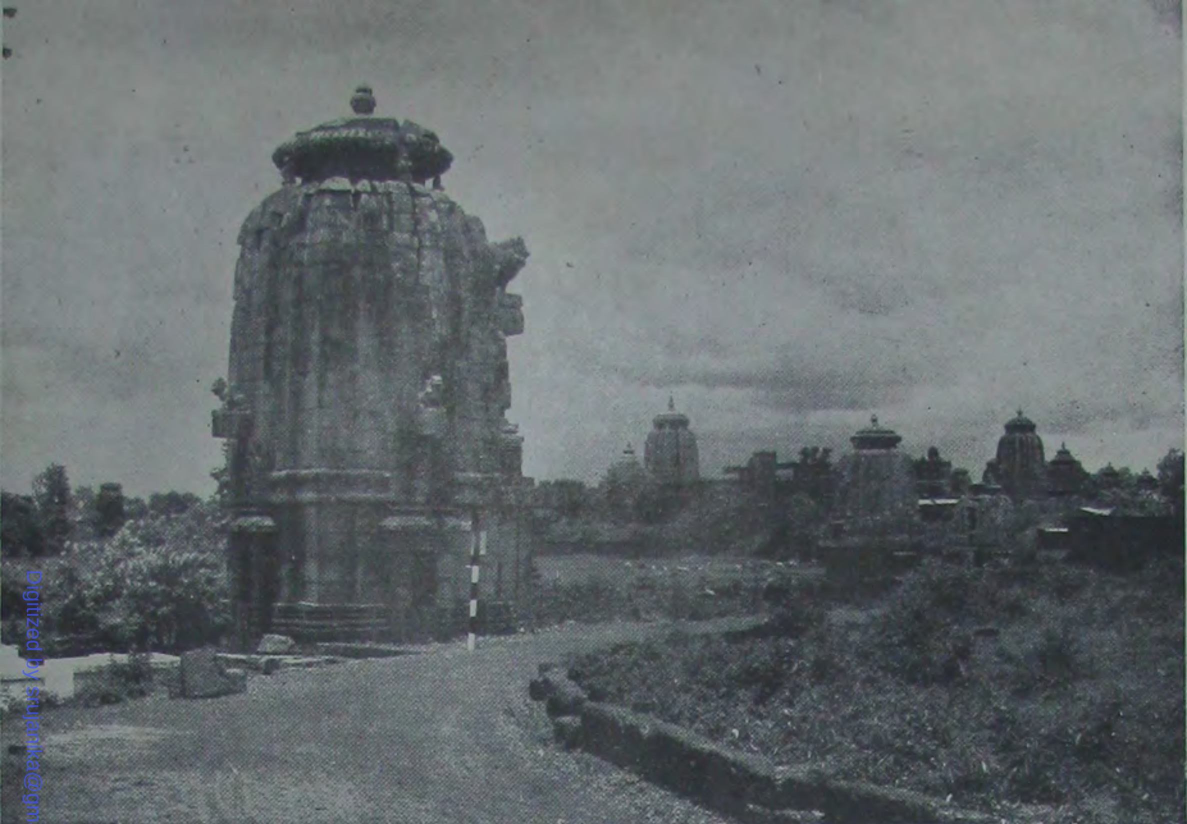
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Frontispiece *Temple upon Temple..............*

Bhubaneshwar : Looking SW towards the Liṅgarāja (middle) from the lane coming from the Paraśurāmeśvara, with fifteen temples visible. In front : the Koṭitīrtheśvara

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Prefatory Note

THIS IS THE second posthumous work of the author. In one of his letters, the author wrote that this was going to be one of the major works of his life. But unfortunately it could not be published in his lifetime, although the research on it was started almost two decades ago and the work was completed in 1965. Formal arrangements for publication took a long time and while they were still under way the author died in 1968. Thereafter, his wife, my sister Ratna Mathur Fabri, took over the task of seeing it through the press. She also passed away four years later. But thanks to the determined efforts of the late Dr. Mayadhar Mansinha, who was closely associated with this project, the Orissa Government, who sponsored this work, and Orient Longman, this work now becomes available in a published form.

July 1974
New Delhi

ASHOK MATHUR

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[PHOTOS LXVI AND LXXXVIII BY THE COURTESY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA AND DR MANSINHA RESPECTIVELY, THE REST BY THE AUTHOR HIMSELF]

Introduction

THE AUTHOR of this book is fully aware of the fact that he has undertaken a rather foolhardy task by attempting to write a history of Orissan art; an impossible task in many ways, for anyone.

It would have been, perhaps, far more accurate to call this book "A First Attempt at a History of Orissan Art", which is what, in fact, it is. During some forty years of study in Indian art history, and more than twelve years of special research into the history of Orissan art, I have, quite frankly, found no book, and not even an article, that has ever attempted to deal in a consecutive, chronological manner with the art history of this State, without doubt one of the richest in the entire subcontinent; there have been *archaeological* and *iconographic* studies of some areas of Orissan art; but it may be stated with no fear of contradiction that even in archaeological matters Orissa has been one of the most neglected areas of this country; there are enormous gaps in our knowledge of the archaeology of Orissa, and, what is worse, there has never been in the whole hundred years of archaeological research in India one single major excavation ever carried out in this State. Such a stepmotherly treatment of a State so rich in antiquities remains a mystery to most of us. The nearest to systematic work ever carried out here were the excavations, lasting only two short seasons, at the site of the Ratnagiri Monastery near Cuttack—surely not a major excavation, not in any way comparable to the many more years' work at, say, Nalanda or Taxila or Harappa or Sanchi. Far more work has been done even at Kausambi, and no attempt whatever has been done so far to excavate in Orissa vast sites known to archaeological authorities at about half a dozen places, including sites of very great promise.

At Sisupalgarh fine work has been done by the Archaeological Survey of India, but far more is left undone ; and as will be seen in this book, some sites have never even been visited by scholars, and are mentioned in this book for the first time, *e.g.* a large Buddhist establishment in Sambalpur District.

So much for archaeology.

But this book *most deliberately does not deal with the archaeology of Orissa, but with her art history.* Archaeology in this work is used exclusively as a *handmaid of art history,* employed purely as a means to an end, and that end, the very purpose of this book, is to give *pure art history,* a treatise on the development and unfolding of Form, what the German scholars so aptly call *Formgeschichte,* history of form. This book is a stylistical study, attempting on the basis of knowledge so far accumulated to build up an aesthetic history, and to organize our scattered data into a fairly clear history of art forms, of aesthetic development, which is always organic, and is based on naturally evolving cycles. Objects of merely archaeological interest and of no aesthetic merit are either not mentioned or used only if they cast some light on works of art.

When, at the suggestion of my very good friend, the poet Dr Mayadhar Mansinha, the former Chief Minister of the State Dr Hare Krishna Mahatab asked me to write this book, I made it clear that I intended to write pure art history ; and when I look back on the five lovely tours I was allowed to make, with the full co-operation and generous assistance of the Government of Orissa, over tens of thousands of miles in this much loved State, I realize that I had, necessarily, done a good deal of archaeological reconaissance work, and some of it will be found incorporated, incidentally, in this book.

What I really aimed at was to extend our scanty knowledge inland. For almost everyone knows Bhubaneshwar, Konarka and Puri, all on the coast ; and there is at least one splendid book on Bhubaneshwar, by far the most learned and by far the most sensitive work written on any part of Orissan art and archaeology, Dr K. C. Panigrahi's admirable *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneshwar.* Some other research workers such as Manomohan Ganguly, have penetrated upcountry too, but their interests were so predominantly archaeological that no one could possibly call Ganguly's work an art history—apart from the fact that many of his dates have proved to be wrong, as it often happens with pioneers. But during my many thousands of miles by jeep and on foot deep into the hinterland of Orissa I have been fortunate enough to piece together a far more consecutive art history than any of my predecessors ; and because I was much more interested in the history of form in art, I could take the liberty of leaving out of my account many monuments which Dr Panigrahi con-

sidered his duty to describe. These omissions are deliberate, whilst those other omissions regarding the hundreds of monuments that are lying unexplored, unexcavated, unknown, have been painfully forced on me. Ten years of intensive research could have made this book much fatter, much better and far more consecutive in narrative I have to leave that better book, reluctantly, to my successors.

What I claim to have achieved, what I hope to have achieved in this little volume is to build up an aesthetic and stylistic history of sorts ; not sufficiently exact to be final, but perhaps laying down the main principles of development of style and change in taste, comprehensive enough for future research workers to build on. Considering the numerous monuments, architectural and sculptural, not yet discovered so far, that is about all anyone could possibly achieve.

Among the important points made in this book is that there has been a period of about six hundred years during which every single image and sculpture so far known is Buddhist, with a few exceptions of Jaina works there is not a single Brahmanic temple or sculpture belonging to this era. These valuable and often very beautiful works include specimens never, to my knowledge, noticed before.

The chronology of the Brahmanic temples is also more solidly evidenced here than before, though some dates must, necessarily, remain conjectural. The development of the Orissa temple form is, in this book, I believe, better traced than in the work of previous students though a final view can only be expected when more Buddhist temples of earlier date are excavated. The twin hills of Lalitagiri and Udayagiri, near Ratnagiri, are waiting for the spade, and so is Ganiapalli in Sambalpur District—never noticed before, and still unprotected. Dr Sahu's excellent pioneer work, *Buddhism in Orissa,* offers plenty of evidence that Buddhism was a potent force in Orissa for many centuries—a fact often forgotten because the present temples of Bhubaneshwar are all Brahmanic. There is ample reference in this volume to the vast amount of Buddhist sculpture, found up and down the entire length and breadth of Orissa—even though not a single copper-plate gives evidence of any donation by any king to a Buddhist establishment.

I have also given rather fuller treatment to the two marvellous temples of the 64 Yoginīs, and attempted to solve, without much success, the problems connected with this strange and hardly understood cult. That the two temples of the 64 Yoginīs are practically unknown and that one of them, the beautiful little shrine at Hirapur, has not been adequately publicised in any way, is one of the reasons why I have given ampler treatment to them ; the other, very important reason being that I consider the Hirapur temple one of the great masterpieces of Indian art, so utterly

different from other contemporary (9th century) work that it might belong to another world. As I am writing these lines, I might add that, to my great delight, I have succeeded a few days ago in convincing authority to build a road to Hirapur. A new road has just been completed to that other masterpiece of Indian art, the Great Monastery of Ratnagiri, and a road now reaches the darling little temple in the village of Madhaba discovered by this writer about ten years ago.

It is hardly worth mentioning here our enormous ignorance, including my own, of the miniature painting of Orissa, to which reference is made in a separate chapter. That the Orissi *qalam* is as distinct a school of miniature painting as any in Rajasthan or the hills of the Punjab or ancient Gujarat, is patently obvious and there must be hundreds of illustrated palm-leaf and paper manuscripts in this little explored state containing exquisite paintings of several centuries. I am painfully aware how little I have achieved in this respect.

And yet, with all these lacunae this book ought to be an eye-opener to much of the almost unparalleled artistry, the exquisite and priceless heritage of the art of Orissa ; and where the text fails, the illustrations will speak more eloquently than the author ever can hope to. If I have succeeded in showing that this artistry of Orissa goes back to earlier times than one formerly thought, certainly to the 2nd century B. C., I shall be content ; but what is even more important is that there is an almost unbroken succession of great works of art all through the centuries, until the 13th century A. D., when Konarka puts a most effective full stop to fifteen centuries of creative activity. What was formerly thought to be six or seven centuries of a gap, is now reduced in this book to hardly more than a hundred years ; and this is a record of which any country, any state, may well feel proud. The history of Orissan art may be, certainly is, full of problems and unsolved puzzles one certainty, however, stands out clearly, like a gigantic temple tower among many smaller shrines that Orissa always produced superb artists, full of individualism and originality, inventive geniuses of tremendous creative ability.

There has never been a copyist in this country, never a mere imitation of other masters' work ; every temple is different, and the variety in sculpture—even of the same theme—is astonishing. I know of no artist of ancient Orissa who ever followed the *Śilpa-śāstras.*

And if I am able to convince the reader of this I have achieved my main aim.

Puri, July 1965 CHARLES LOUIS FABRI

1

Prehistoric Art

REFERENCE has been made in the *Introduction* to the deplorable state of antiquarian evidence in Orissa. And I might as well start this study by pointing out—as I shall have to do again and again—our abysmal ignorance in many matters concerning certain periods of Orissa history and art history. Prehistoric finds, of which there ought to be, obviously, thousands, are conspicuous by their almost total absence. There are a few stone implements in the Khiching Museum, a few in the Baripada Museum, but not one object of any artistic value.

There is a strange reference, not easily intelligible, to prehistoric pictographs (?) or paintings (?) in some caves at a small place called Gudahandi, some 50 miles sw of Bhawanipatna, "just on the border of Nabarangpur in Koraput District". Mr. Satyanarayan Rajguru visited this site in the year 1947, and writes of "some pictographic paints (*sic*), pertaining to remote palaeolithic age", and "prehistoric writings awaiting thorough examination".[1] But in the absence of a more specific clue we can venture no opinion as to the prehistoric art of Orissa. The case is quite different, fortunately with regard to the art of historical times, as we shall see in the following pages.

1. *Annual Report of the Research Assistant of the Kalinga Historical Research Society for the year 1947*. In the *J. Kalinga Hist. R. S.*, Jan. 1950, p. 243.

2

Early Art from the 3rd Century B.C. to the 3rd Century A.D.

THE Emperor Aśoka (*c.* 273—236 B.C.) who left his mark on the entire history of India as well as on that of Orissa, is evidently responsible for the first works of artistic merit known to us now. Unfortunately, they are all fragmentary and while discussing their aesthetic qualities, we must, necessarily, take recourse to the evidence available in other creations of this great patron of art, found outside Orissa.

It is now widely accepted that the main materials used for building and sculpture before Aśoka's days were timber and clay.[1] Houses, as we have plenty of sculptural evidence, were erected either entirely of wood, or partly of wood and mud bricks. Timber architecture survives in a rudimentary form in some parts of India ; in Kerala, notably, and in the

1. In a most tell-tale reference to house-building in his days, the Buddha says "Just as it is by and because of wattle and withies, grass and clay, that a space is enclosed which is called 'a house', so it is......" *Majjhima-nikāya,* I, XXVIII, Mahāhatthi—padopana Sutta, in Chalmers' translation, *Sacred Book of the Buddhists,* Vol. V, p. 137. Observe that he does not even mention stone or brick.

Panjab hills, deep into Kashmir and in Nepal. Mud is still used, to be sure, as the most important building material in India, where millions of village houses are made of it. Burnt clay (terra-cotta) figures and plaques with relievo figures, going back to many centuries before Aśoka, have been unearthed in good numbers in many parts of India, and thus there is ample evidence that burnt clay was widely used for sculptural work.[2] This material also survives into the present day ; not only are there such religious figurines as the Divali "toys" made of clay, but the "Mother Horses" (*Mātā-gorā*), those devotional figures of both horses and elephants that are still *the* most accepted forms of worship among the vast masses of the people of India, can be found in hundreds and thousands of villages, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, and certainly in every district of Orissa.

Recent excavations, bridging the gap between the Harappa civilization and the historic times, have brought ample proof that pre-Aśokan architecture was mainly in perishable materials ; mud brick and timber were used almost everywhere, except in some areas where stone was in abundance. One notable example of this architecture before Aśoka's times is the wall of fortification round the town of old Rajgir a cyclopean type of wall, made of unhewn, unfashioned stones. As this is in the neighbouring State of Bihar, with which Orissa had many centuries of intimate connexion, it is not an unjustified conclusion that walls of fortification may have been made in Orissa in pre-Aśokan times from such rough stone masonry ; but it is equally likely that all other building was done in mud, wood and bamboo, just as today the vast majority of dwellings in Orissa are still made of those materials, usually with a thatched roof, or one made of palm fronds. In this respect, as in many others, prehistory seems to continue into the present day.

A fine example of the type of houses common in the pre-Christian times can be seen in the photograph of a small detail found on the lower storey frieze at the Rani Gumpha, Udayagiri, near Bhubaneshwar (Plate VI). Though the first impression is that this is a two-storeyed house, on closer examination it becomes clear that we have here two different houses, both roofed, and that the artist attempted to show them as standing one behind the other ; his knowledge of perspective was, of course, too elementary to make this clear. Both are obviously mud huts, with bamboo uprights and bent bamboo doorways, covered with thatched roofs. One has a bamboo railing all round it. The stone railing right at the bottom is not, really, part of the panel it is a decorative device run-

2. There is also evidence that burnt bricks were used for sacrificial altars from Vedic days ; but there is no evidence of their being used for civic building.

ning along, and has become known as the "Buddhist railing". It will be observed that the upper railing is plainly made of reed or bamboo.

It was the Emperor Aśoka who was instrumental in introducing fashioned stone both for architecture and for sculpture. The effect of this innovation changed the whole course of Indian art. Monumental structures, hitherto impossible, came into being, such as the vast Mauryan palace at Patna (ancient Pāṭaliputra), where the roof rested on gigantic monolithic pillars ; or the equally monumental memorial pillars, erected by the Emperor all over his extensive domains, often at important places of pilgrimage or crossroads, bearing his edicts, in which he exhorts the citizens to live a good and kindly life, and the civil administrators, to be good and kind to those put in their charge in other words, to carry the Dharma of the Buddha into their daily lives.

Now Aśoka obtained this idea of stone architecture and sculpture through his contact with the neighbouring great empire of the Achaemenids of Iran. Aśoka had a vision of the importance of foreign connexions, and of the value of sending messengers, or ambassadors, to his fellow princes; and the majestic stone structures of the royal palaces at Persepolis, some parts of which were more than two hundred years old at that time, inspired him to turn his attention to the erection of monuments. Not being addicted to self-glorification as the Achaemenids were, he used the idea of these huge pillars for a much nobler purpose ; but his stone masons were Iranians ; and not only did they leave the mark of their handicraft on the Aśokan pillars, they also left Persian stone masons' marks on the pillars in the Mauryan palace at Pāṭaliputra. These "signature" marks in Persian are still extant.

Though this is the most convincing proof of the importation of foreign master masons, one would have come to the same conclusion without them. For the memorial pillars that Aśoka erected all over India are nothing but an Indian variation on an Iranian theme ; the same marble-like polish, the same inverted lotus capital, the same motifs of palmette, acanthus and rosette that have been in use for more than two hundred years by Achaemenid artists ; and though there are Indian additions, such as the sacred geese (*haṅsa*), or the humped brahminy bull, or the most typical of Indian animals, the elephant, the basic design of these pillars and their capitals is identical even in small details with those in the palaces of Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes at Persepolis.[3]

It is, hence, natural that the oldest known stone sculptures in Orissa date from the Mauryan emperor's times. One of the extant sculptures is undoubtedly of Aśoka's own days, whilst the other two can be ascribed

3. Cp. my article in *Indo-Asian Culture*, I, 2 (1952), pp. 148—152.

to his times with a very high degree of probability. And what is remarkable is that every Aśokan monument found in Orissa is noticeably different, in several respects, from all the Aśokan monuments elsewhere.

The use of the locally available stone does, of course, account for a different finish. None (except one) of the Orissan monuments of Aśoka's days possesses the famous "Mauryan polish", that almost mirror-like polish that made 19th century investigators think that they were made of metal. It is noteworthy that all Aśokan monuments, wherever they are, in Madras or in the North-West Frontier Province, possess this elaborate polish that must be seen to be believed ; only the local Orissan monuments are rough on the surface.

At Dhauli, on the south bank of the Daya river, some eight kilometres south of Bhubaneshwar, there is a rock in which are incized some of the edicts of Aśoka. This was presumably at some crossroads near the often mentioned and celebrated capital city of Kalinga, Tosalī, which has not been identified as yet with certainty. But Aśoka's edicts were always placed at some place conveniently central to be read by many people.

Attached to the terrace above the rock containing Aśoka's edicts is the figure of an elephant, carved out of the living rock, and rather smaller than an average man's height. It is not completely cut out of the rock, and must be considered to be unfinished. I have very little doubt that it was the artist's intention to cut away all the rock behind the elephant, and to make it a free standing image, carved in the round.

Now it must be noted at once that there is not one single example of Aśoka's time of an elephant (or for that matter any other figure) being cut out of the living rock. All Aśoka's animal figures were hewn from blocks of stone quarried and carted away from their hill ; though there are undoubtedly a few caves, such as the famous Ājīvika cave in the Barabar Hills (Bihar) that are cut into the hill but not free standing statues.

The animals in Aśokan art fall clearly into two stylistical groups. On the one hand we have highly stylized creatures, treated decoratively and schematically, such as the lions ; on the other hand are the much more naturalistically treated, though simplified and idealized, animal figures, among which the Rampurva Bull Capital is the most perfect example ; besides the relievo figures of the horse, bull and elephant on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital. These two styles are vastly different. The lions derive from a two thousand year old tradition on lion-carving, from Mesopotamia,[4] in which almost every detail has been schematized through

4. Cp. *Mesopotamian and Early Indian Art Comparis* See Bibliography in this book.

centuries of repetition and evolution, such as the highly stylized hair locks, or the Assyrian type muscular treatment of the legs, or the open jaws, with exaggerated muscles over the upper lip. The other style, idealized and simplified naturalism, is in such striking contrast to the above (and to any other work of the period in India) that students had come to the conclusion, no doubt justly, that we have here some remote Hellenistic-Iranian influence—even if it can not be pinned down by actual comparisons.

The Dhauli elephant belongs to the second category. There is a powerful observation of nature, without descending to slavish imitation. Difficult as it is to know how much deterioration is due to weathering and the action of the saline air, it is clear that the legs are much less well done than the head, which is majestic, pachydermous and noble.

If this incomplete but undoubtedly Aśokan carving is evidently the work of a local artist, cut in a different material, lacking the polish of other Aśokan monuments, and cut out of the rock, as no other Aśokan monument was, we must not feel surprised if an Aśokan pillar capital confronts us in Orissa which is also marked by this "Orissan characteristic" of Aśokan art an undoubted, typical product of the imperial style, with the sole exception of this one feature, the polish. There is very little to be said about this pillar capital except that it is like so many other imperial Mauryan capitals, and that it is unpolished. That is not much. But the point is once again that the very existence of this pillar capital suggests that somewhere, probably in the neighbourhood of the Bhāskareśvara temple at Bhubaneshwar, there must be more remains of those times, waiting to be dug up. "Where there is a smoke, there is a fire", says a Sanskrit proverb. One could say with equal justification "Where there is a pillar capital, there must have been a pillar too".

It is in this connexion, or rather in this context, that we must examine Mr Panigrahi's fascinating theory that the enormous, certainly unfinished, and polished Śiva-*liṅga,* inserted, rather clumsily, in that strange temple, the Bhāskareśvara, is nothing but an ancient Mauryan pillar re-used by Śaivas as an emblem of Śiva. It would be foolish to dismiss this theory offhand, for a number of reasons. One is that the lower portion of this *liṅga,* as it now stands inside the temple, shows undoubtedly the same roughness that Aśokan pillars show in those portions that were intended to be inserted in the ground ; hence, they were not polished. It is possible to envisage, therefore, that when the old pillar was re-used as a *liṅga,* it was erected in such a manner that a small part of the pillar intended to be stuck into the ground, remained visible. Secondly, the *liṅga,* as it stands now, does not show the usual markings of a *penis erectus* found almost invariably on Śiva-*liṅgas ;* indeed, it does not have at all,

not in the least, the customary shape of a *liṅga,* but looks very much like a broken piece of a rather slightly tapering pillar.

But there is more than that to it. Why is it that the Bhāskareśvara is the one and only two-storeyed temple in the whole of Orissa ? (Plate I). It bears no resemblance to any other construction in Bhubaneshwar or anywhere else in the State ; and the only rational explanation that occurs to me is that it *had* to be erected in two storeys for the very special reason that it was intended to house a gigantic Śiva-*liṅga,* found in *situ* as a fragment of a pillar, and for which there was no precedent in Orissan temple architecture. "Miraculously" found cult objects are a constant feature of ancient religious literature. According to one version, the wooden statue of Jagannāth himself was washed up by the sea ; the cult image at Sakhigopāla has been found in miraculous circumstances, and so on. It is, therefore, justified to visualize the finding of a huge *liṅga*-looking stone (about a thousand years after it had been erected as a pillar by Aśoka) as a religious event of profound significance. It is readily intelligible that the architect would be told that he had to make a temple high enough to hold this sacred object, and that he had to invent a new type of temple of two-storeys, to house this hallowed, inviolable object of worship.

There is further evidence to suggest that the Bhāskareśvara is no ordinary temple. It is the one and only temple in Bhubaneshwar erected on a distinctly visible mound of notable height ; and it is precisely in this selfsame mound and round it that the oldest sculptural remains of Orissa have been unearthed. These are fragments of a so-called Buddhist railing, essentially of the same style as those of Bharhut, Bodh-Gaya or Sanchi.

As far as can be made out, from not very clear accounts left to us, Prof. Radhakumud Mukherji found a fragment in or about 1926, "to the North of the temple of Bhāskareśvar, locally known as Megheśvar",[5] which seems a contradictory statement, for the Megheśvara temple is a different structure, at some distance from the Bhāskareśvara. This is a Buddhist railing post with lenticular sockets in two adjacent sides, and two turbaned figures in an attitude of adoration. It is, presumably, this post that is now in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta. Another one, the precise date of excavation of which I have not been able to ascertain, is in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneshwar, and is illustrated in my Plate II. Two more were excavated by Mr Nirmal Kumar Basu in 1928 or 1929, near the place where Dr Mukherji found his pillar, "near a slight mound upon which the Bhāskareśvar is situated" These, as far as is known to me, were removed to Puri,[6] but I have been unable to find out more about them.

5. *JBEORS.* XV, I-II (1929), pp. 259ff.

6. Mitra, *Bhubaneshwara,* p. 10.

Here, then, is evidence that somewhere, close to the strange two-storeyed temple that houses the enormous Śiva-*liṅga* that is, in all probability, a portion of an Aśokan pillar, there existed a Buddhist stone railing, datable on stylislical grounds to the 1st or 2nd century B.C. The very primitive and clumsy character of the few figures now discernible on these posts suggests the earlier date, nearer to Bharhut, *i.e.* mid-2nd century B.C., also suggested by the small size of the railing posts—for it is a fact that the height of the railing increases in later years, as a rule. Mr N. K. Basu mentions "gloved hands and high boots" on the figures that he has excavated, and thinks they are posterior to Bharhut. Apart from the fact that the stūpa of Bharhut took a hundred and fifty years to complete, there is the fact that a "Persian soldier" with curly hair, short sword, high boots and Iranian accoutrements is one of the most remarkable figures on the upright posts of the stūpa railing at Bharhut. Booted figures in western Asian type dress are also found, as will be seen, in two caves at Udayagiri, though those are undoubtedly a little later.

It is inevitable to conclude that excavation around the Bhāskareśvara Temple at Bhubaneshwar would be of utmost importance for the early history of art in Orissa; and though religious sentiment may stand in the way of digging up the *liṅga* actually worshipped in the Bhāskareśvara, it is not impossible to hope that priesthood and laity might be convinced that no sacrilege is intended, and that such a piece of research would only enhance the sanctity of the emblem by establishing its antiquity. That the mound on which the temple now stands hides the remains of an Aśokan stūpa (frequently mentioned as the Tosali Stūpa in ancient literature) is not beyond the realm of probability. If found, it would be among the most ancient stūpas ever found in India.

There is, also, further evidence that a polished pillar of Aśoka must have stood somewhere in the neighbourhood. A rather small fragment of what must undoubtedly be considered a typical Mauryan pillar, stands now in the Orissa State Museum. This must have formed part of a huge monolith, and has a brilliant polish.

* * *

Dr K. C. Panigrahi, who unearthed the railing post now in the Orissa State Museum, has also enriched that collection with four yaksha-figures of an early date. Three of these he obtained in a village called Dumduma, near Khandagiri,[7] and the fourth he found not far from the Brahmeśvara

7. Notwithstanding this information, the officials of the State Museum claim that one of the yakshas comes from Jagmora village.

temple in Bhubaneshwar. Two other images of the same category—a nāga and two nāginīs—are worshipped in a shed at Kapilprasad village, a distance of only three kilometres from the Liṅgarāja Temple of Bhubaneshwar (Plate III), two yaksha images are reported by Dr N. K. Sahu in Badagada, near Bhubaneshwar, and Panchagan, some five miles from the town.[8]

It will be seen, consequently, that in the period 2nd century B.C. to 2nd century A.D., to which these village deities can be ascribed on stylistical grounds, Orissans not only worshipped the same type of *dii minores* or *grāmadevatās* that the rest of India did, from Gandhara and Mathura in the North to the Dravida people in the South, but that they also embarked, for the first time in Indian art history, on carving these much loved local godlings in stone. As no stone statues of these tutelary deities, known from Buddhist literature from the earliest times, have ever been found belonging to the period before the 2nd century B.C., it is reasonable to conclude that the sculpturing in stone of these was the result of the imperial introduction of stone carving during Aśoka.

It is pertinent to remark at this point that carving in the round was undoubtedly an alien element to Indian art. It appears in Aśokan days, lasts a century or two, and disappears almost totally from the rest of Indian art, as unsuited to the spirit of Indian conception. Although there are a few, notable exceptions to this rule (*e.g.* the celestial musicians on the Sun Temple at Konarka), and small, portable figures, such as bronzes, were made tridimensional, to the Indian sculptor carving meant relievo carving, and anyone who examines the history of Indian sculpture will find that the immeasurably largest part of Indian sculpture is relief work, emerging, as it were, out of the background of a temple wall not in the round. The point to remember is that in ancient India the various artistic professions were not as separated as they are today sculptor, painter and architect all went by the name of *śilpin*, and as all ancient sculpture was originally painted, there was no clear break between the painter and the sculptor. The artist who carved the image in relievo, *conceived it as a picture*, and painted it in the colours he visualized when he had carved the stone ; and it is necessary here to mention that much of this survives into the present day. Not only are images painted today, in Orissa as elsewhere, whether they are made of wood, as the Jagannātha cult images are, or in stone, but in the case of a surviving wooden temple, such as that at Buguda (near Berhampur), about which I shall have to say more, the entire woodcarving, from the ground to the roof, intricate relievo work with hundreds of divine and animal figures, floral and

8. *Buddh. in Orissa*, pp. 33-34. Cp. also *OHRS.*, V. 4, pp. 190ff, where Mr R. N. Mehta mentions two more at Sundarpada.

geometric ornaments, is painted in gorgeous colours. All this is, hence, conceived as a pictor would conceive it, not as a sculptor.

For the brief period during Aśoka's reign, and for a short time after that, the sculptor adopts this alien notion of carving images in the round, from all sides, and we have notable examples from the U.P., especially Mathura, and from the neighbouring Bihar. There are also some extremely ancient figures, probably not more than three in number, from the adjoining territory of Andhra (Amarāvatī and the Veṅgi area, next to present Orissa), some of it going back, in all probability, to the 3rd century B.C.

These archaic statues are characterized by the main features of archaic statues anywhere. They are massive, the figures stand frontally, motionless, rigid, like soldiers standing to attention the arms are almost invariably pinned as it were, to the flanks of the body, and when the hands make the slightest, rather clumsy movement, the statues must be reckoned to be a little later in date.

Frontality, rigidity and symmetry are the main characteristics of all the archaic yaksha and nāga images in Orissa too; and they are, therefore, part and portion of the general history of art unfolding to India. The cycle of development, although only partially observable in Orissa because of lack of research, is simply from the archaic (3rd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D.), by gradual discovery of skill and reality, to the idealized perfection of the classic period (4th and 5th centuries A.D.), which slowly gives way to a mannerism first (6th and 7th centuries A.D.) to evolve a glorious baroque (8th to 13th centuries) that ultimately ends in a brief rococo and a deterioration of standards. As this is the main theme of the present book, the characteristics of these periods will be dealt with in detail in the forthcoming chapters in due course; at the present moment, when dealing with the most archaic statues a word of explanation will be necessary about the emergence of these tutelary deities, the yakshas and yakshīs, the nāgas and nāginīs. They may be described, with some approximation, as nymphs and fauns, serpent gods and serpent maidens that live in woods, inhabit the trees and rivulets, denizens of the wild, chambers that whisper in the branches of the trees and waylay the bold traveller in the jungle. Though many of them are masculine, it is noteworthy that the majority are lovely women, seducers and charmers of primordial forests, often represented as nude or almost nude lovelies (the Sanskrit word *sundarī* used for them means precisely that), and as these belles often live in trees, they are referred to sometimes as *vrikshakās* which can fairly translated as wood-nymphs.[9]

9. The following passage is, with slight changes from my article, *Mathura of the Gods,* published in *MARG,* VII, 2, pp. 8—22.

Some other scholars have commented before me on the incongruity of meeting these lovely, sensuous damsels, nude to a high degree, often displaying their most hidden charms, on all the most important first monuments of Buddhism. They have, to be sure, nothing to do with the original teachings of the Buddha. For the Master preached the middle Path, advised his followers to desist from the desires of the senses, and as to the community of the Buddhists monks, the Saṅgha, they lived a life of celibacy. Whence, then, these seductive, luscious beauties ?

For a thousand years the great mass of the simple folk of India, the majority of whom were descendants of the pre-Aryan inhabitants, had to live in fear of an ever more powerful Brahminic hierarchy. To these *ādivāsis* and other simple folk the Aryan religion was an alien imposition, brought in by those fairskinned foreigners who reduced the original inhabitants to slavery (they were the *dāsas*)[10] and misery. Unable to worship openly their beloved little fairies, spirits, nymphs, the yakshas and yakshīs, they continued to pay them in secret their homage, often carrying with them the newcomers, many of whom intermarried with these Dasyus.

But then arose this new preacher, the Buddha ; himself not a Brahman by birth, he openly spoke against the Brahmans (all you have to do to find that out is to read the whole chapter devoted to anti-Brahmanic utterances in the *Dhammapada*, the "Brahma Varga") you do not have to pay money or produce or cattle to the priests for your prayers, you do not have to speak the "difficult" (*Saṅskṛita* means "complicated") foreign language Māgadhi is good enough for the Magadhians, and every man is his own priest. The Brahmans count for nothing. Every man can achieve his own salvation by following the ethical rules of the Eightfold Path.

Not only the Buddha, but his elder contemporary, the Mahāvīra Jina too, was an open defier of the Brahmans and all their religion. The new spirit of freedom spread like wild fire. A sense of liberation came to the simple folk who had, so far, worshipped their darling nymphs and godlings in secret. Once these popular forces were released, they came out into the open. There was no need to be ashamed of worshipping tree and water deities, and Buddhism, with a tolerance for the common peoples' faith, allowed any kind of worship, provided the ethical rules were followed, and the Dharma was recognized as the supreme law of behaviour.

This victory of ancient beliefs over the imported Vedic gods was much more complete than your books recognize. The Brahmans, as they watched their power slipping out of their hands, acquiesced gradually in the

10. The Sanskrit word *dāsa* means 'slave'.

recognition of these deep-rooted elements of faith ; just as they managed to absorb, later, much of Buddhist religion in that totally different religion that came with the decline of Buddhism. The Vedic gods never really returned again, and when Buddhism was ousted by Hinduism, the new religion preached by the priests themselves was basically different from pre-Buddhist Aryan faith. The place of rite and ceremony is taken by love, devotion, *bhakti* ; much of the best of Buddhism is incorporated in the new Hinduism, and so is a whole world of godlings and nymphs. And the most widely worshipped gods are no more white, alien divinities, but the two Black Gods, the beloved cowherd, Kṛishṇa (which means "black") and the great goddess Kālī (which means "black").

It is in this context that we must see archaic Orissan art. The first images are not those of Vedic deities or of Buddhist faith : they are popular village gods, spirits and nymphs of the Orissan jungle, And however powerful the priesthood becomes in later days, it may be emphasized here, the strong undercurrent of pre-Aryan faith is powerful in Orissa, probably much more powerful here than in many an other part of India. Not only is Jagannātha an outstanding example of a non-Aryan, aborigine divinity, carved with the barbarous beauty of primitive art, accepted by the Brahmans into their pantheon, but practically every temple in Bhubaneshwar and elsewhere in Orissa is an eloquent testimony to the survival of non-Aryan beliefs. The lovely *vṛikshakās* and the seductive *sundarīs,* the countless *nāgas* and *nāgakanyās* (serpent maidens) that decorate in profusion the temples of this country have no parallel, I believe, in any part of India. There are some temples, the Rājarāni in Bhubaneshwar and the Sun Temple at Konarka among them, on which the *sundarīs* of the forest and the river vastly exceed all the Brahminic gods' images they are descendants of these early, archaic statues on which the primitive artist of the 3rd century B.C. first tried his chisel.

Once it is realized how great the part is that primordial beliefs played in Orissa art, a different view will be taken, I suggest, of the fact that the true faith of Orissa is not what the temples suggest, some kind of orthodox Hinduism ; the true faith of the masses of Orissa is best expressed even today in their worship of wood nymphs, dryads and in the votive figures of horse and elephant deposited in their thousands under hundreds of trees, everywhere in the jungle, even in the great cities and the small. You read practically nothing about these *Thākurāṇi* horses, these *Mātāgorās* in your learned books ; but these belong to a tradition as old as the Aśokan period yaksha statues, or older.

It has been suggested by several authors that sockets, found in some of the heads of these images, "indicate that they were originally the struc-

tural parts of some old monuments".[11] I find this conjecture rather unlikely. No statues of this size have ever been found anywhere in India as structural components of any building. The *yakshas* and *gaṇas* that are frequently found as supporters of *toraṇa* crossbars, or as portions of a capital of a pillar, are ever so much smaller, and are almost invariably found in groups, not single. The Dumduma *yaksha* and the Kapilprasad *nāga* and *nāginī* are large, free standing statues of considerable weight, and could not, possibly, have formed part of a pillar or railing; one has been measured and is reported to be 5 feet 7 inches in height; the others that I have seen are all life-size, enormous blocks of stone, quite unsuitable for being used as an element in a Buddhist railing.

A glance at the two plates, Plates III and IV, will suffice to see that these are individual cult images; and it does not take much imagination to visualize them as erected under a Sacred Tree—as the Kapilprasad images are set up now. The Dumduma *yaksha* is a strange, and in every way barbarous, primitive figure. To all appearances, it shows a male *from behind,* not in front. The buttocks are well enough visible, though the modelling is flat, not only due to weathering through the ages, but it must always have been so. The bundle of clothes at the waist also suggests back of a male, and one can discern, with some certainty, over the coarsely carved necklace, the ends of the hair on the nape of the neck. The proportion of the upper torso to the rest is very small, whilst the neck, even if one counts the thick hair, is enormous. This is archaic work, in its uncouth solidity, a big hulk of an almost shapeless mass, impressive in its enormity, carved by a simple, unskilled man. One is reminded of the Yaksha of Parkham, reckoned on all hand to be the oldest extant image; but the Dumduma *yaksha* in the Orissa State Museum is either contemporary and then carved by a "provincial" whose skill was even less than that of the Parkham sculptor, or else it may be an earlier piece. With some little hesitation, I suggest a date of around 300 B.C., but would not exclude a date a generation older than that.

The two images at Kapilprasad (there is a third one too, and dozens of *mātā-gorās* deposited in front of them all) are obviously far more advanced in skill. Both are mighty, impressive, fully life size, with terrifying hoods of snakes over their heads. Both stand with arms akimbo, the legs slightly apart, forming, as it were, an inverted V. They are absolutely, completely frontal, symmetrical and rigid, thus possessing all the three basic features of archaic sculpture. The *nāgarāja* is pot-bellied, the *nāginī* has bulbous breasts and prominent hips. The turban of the serpent king is of great importance in dating it is the typical head dress

11. N. K. Sahu *Buddhism in Orissa,* p. 33, and elsewhere.

worn by the earliest statues at Bharhut, and different from the usual covering worn by somewhat similar statues at Mathura. The date that this turban suggests is, therefore, around 150 B.C. but the strange coiffure of the serpent goddess reminds one of the Mauryan terracottas of which quite a number are in the Patna Museum. Those are even more elaborate, but all possess the "side-flaps", of which something can be seen in our serpent goddess's crown. Nothing prevents us from dating these two statues to a period just before 150 B.C. They are much better carved, better proportioned, more elaborate than the Dumduma yaksha ; the serpent hoods are splendidly done, though the treatment of the drapery and of the rather scant jewellery is inferior to many a later *yaksha* and *nāga*-image. Comparison with Mathura work is most misleading ; for, as I have explained at length in my article, *Mathura of the Gods,*[12] the craftsmen of Mathura continued working in an archaic manner for centuries, and it is patently obvious that they produced, for the benefit of a simple and devout clientèle, copies of ancient images, some of which have been dated by scholars to be as much as three hundred years behind the style of the age.

These two serpent images must, hence, be reckoned among the very earliest extant images of Indian art, contemporary with the earliest phase of Bharhut or so, and members of a rather small family of Indian images made in the round.

There is, however, one point of comparison that should be mentioned here. In Mathura we have a good number of *yaksha* and *yakshī* images with large sized vases on their heads. One such, *e.g.* is illustrated in Dr Vogel's great work[13] in Plate I a *yakshī,* carrying a jug of water, a dish of food, and on her head, a large vase. It is, in my opinion, quite possible that the socket observed by students on top of the Orissa *yaksha* images was intended to hold a stone vase.

Here, then, are a few of those early images that must have been worshipped during Aśoka's reign and after, by those to whom the emperor refers in his edicts as *deva-dhammikās, i.e.* whose Dharma includes the worship of devas, theists. That there must be many more examples of such statuary in the ground, or worshipped in small villages of today, cannot be doubted.

* * *

Two more or less contemporary fortified cities give up some, rather scanty, evidence of evil architecture. One is at Jaugada, in the District of Ganjam, the other at Sisupalgarh, near Bhubaneshwar.

12. *MARG,* VII, 2, pp. 8–22.

13. *La Sculpture de Mathura,* Plate I.

The excavations at Jaugada in 1956-57, near the Rock Edicts of Aśoka, revealed a fortified town, the dating of which is, so far, rather vague.[14] It is clear that the occupation of this town goes back to several centuries before Christ, and Puri Kushān coins indicate that the town was a flourishing place well into the first few centuries A.D. Unfortunately, the excavations are far from complete, and all one can observe is that a square rampart surrounded the houses, with two gates on each side, and that it was carefully kept up and repaired from time to time. Part of this fortification is earth, but there are remains of a rubble wall.

Sisupalgarh (close to Bhubaneshwar) is a very different matter. Here are some of the finest bulwarks of any period in Indian history, with an astonishingly intelligent gate, easily defended, and allowing individuals to pass through a small passage carefully guarded, when the main gates were closed. Huge boulders of laterite form the gate, excellently finished and set together in well defined courses ; the alignment is admirable, and shows highly developed architectural skill. Inside the fortified walls, only partially excavated[15] trial digging revealed rows of houses, mostly built of laterite stone, and one pillared and porticoed hall, that might have been either a palace or some shrine. Here again, the excavation leaves much to be done, and one can only hope that earnest efforts will be made to clear the whole town one of the oldest ever found in India. Only Rajgir and Taxila can be reckoned as older.

For Sisupalgarh may well be either the Tosali or Kaliṅganagara known from literature and it is highly likely that it was the capital city and residence of the Emperor Khāravela, whose long inscription constitutes one of the most interesting features of the Udayagiri complex of caves.

The Jain caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri are only a few kilometres distant from Sisupalgarh ; and in the lengthy inscription of the emperor Khāravela in the Hāthigumpha, he mentions, among many other matters, that a cyclone had devastated the gates, walls and houses of his capital, and that he had them repaired. It is perhaps more than a coincidence that the excavators found a portion of the western gateway of Sisupalgarh collapsed and repaired ; neither is it impossible that the emperor would have supported the holy monks of the Jains living so close by, in the next hill, so to say, because his capital was only a little distance away. Nevertheless, some scholars, including Mr Panigrahi, argue that Sisupalgarh was Tosali,[16] whilst others identify this site with Kaliṅganagara,

14. *Indian Archaeology, 1956-57*, pp. 30-31.

15. *Ancient India*, No. 5, pp. 62—105 ; and No. 9, pp. 168-169.—*JAHRS.*, XIX, pp. 140ff.

16. *Orissa Review*, Orissa Monuments Special, Vol. VI, 1949, pp. 34-35.

which was the capital of the Chedi kings of the Mahāmeghavāhana family in the 2nd-1st centuries B.C. Excavations up to the present time indicate that the town was occupied as early as the beginning of the 3rd century B.C., and that it was inhabited as late as the 4th century A.D. Here, then, is another site in Orissa very much worth excavating.

Whilst, as was shown above, the number of remains of this period, both architectural and sculptural, are very few, there is one ancient site, belonging to this age, that is one of our richest pieces of evidence for early art in India the Jain caves in the twin hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri. These deserve a separate chapter.

3

The Caves in the Bhubaneshwar Hills

IN the twin hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, some 6 km from Bhubaneshwar, there are a large number of caves, excavated mainly for Jain monks ; though the possibility of Buddhist occupation is not excluded by some students. There are 44 caves in the Udayagiri and 19 in the Khandagiri. None of them is a Buddhist *chaitya* or cathedral, so that Buddhist occupation does not seem likely to this author.

A good deal has been written on these caves, ever since they were first noticed by Stirling in the *Asiatick Researches* in 1824, and since they have been discussed by Ferguson in *Illustrations of the Rock-cut Temples of India* in 1845. Opinions differ considerably on their dates, many of the earlier students having placed their excavation as far back as the 2nd and 3rd century B.C., whereas Dr Walter Spink of Harvard comes to the conclusion that the date should be practically 500 years later.[1]

Much of this trouble arises out of a celebrated and enigmatic inscription in 17 lines engraved in the rock of the Hathigumpha ("Elephant Cave") by the Emperor Khāravela. This Emperor, of whom we know

1. Dr Walter Spink, *Rock-cut Monuments of the Andhra Period Their Style and Chronology*. Harvard University 1954.

next to nothing, is unknown to the Purāṇas, and his date is so uncertain that according to some learned historians he belonged to the 2nd century B.C. and his inscription dates from about 160 B.C., whereas according to others it must be "much, much later". Prof. de la Vallée Poussin thinks that the inscription might actually belong to the beginning of the first century A.D.[2]

Now inscriptions are among the most valuable tools of the archaelogist in India, but they can be dangerous. I have shown elsewhere[3] that a slavish dependence on epigraphs can be most misleading, as is the case with Ajanta, where many scholars made the unforgivable mistake of believing that an inscription on or in a cave is evidence that that cave and all its sculptures and all its paintings must be dated to the period mentioned in the inscription. This is totally untrue; and we possess undoubted evidence that in the earliest caves of Ajanta some paintings were added eight hundred years later. Anyone can add sculpture and paint new paintings hundreds of years after the inscription had been incised or painted on a wall. Even less can be made of an epigraph that can hardly be dated with any precision, as is the case with Khāravela's Hathigumpha text, bristling with difficulties, and about half of which is illegible in any case. There are, to be sure, some other inscriptions in other caves—two in the Manchapuri Cave, to mention a couple of them—and they are of some help ; but not much.

A few points, nevertheless, emerge. It is clear, *e.g.* that when Khāravela's inscription was engraved, there were already some caves in existence, and that Jain monks lived in these hills ; it is also quite clear that Khāravela was a Jain, that he was a patron of Jain monks, and that his chief queen was a devout Jain, and that the great-grandchildren of this chief queen must have been Jains too, some one hundred years later than the Hathigumpha epigraph.

We are, thus, thrown back on art historical, stylistical considerations as far more reliable than these undated and undatable inscriptions.

The first patently obvious fact that emerges is simply this that the sixty odd caves in these two hills must have taken several hundred years to excavate ; they show such a development of styles and even if the occupation was not as long as at Ajanta, where we find a thousand years of artistic activity, Khandagiri and Udayagiri must have taken some 350 years to create. There is evidence of Jain occupation from the 2nd century B.C. into the 11th century A.D., perhaps with a gap of a few hundred years between the 2nd century A.D. and the 8th.

2. *L' Inde aux temps des Mauryas* etc., Paris 1930, p. 198.
3. *MARG*, IX, 1.

With the possible exception of the much later Jain caves at Ellora, the caves in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills must be counted as the finest rock-cut works the Jain community has ever produced. They are not only fascinating, as a continuous document for the development of archaic art from the 2nd century B.C. to the 1st and 2nd century A.D., they also embrace some of the most admissible sculpture of that period, produced anywhere in India by any community, and bear, in many senses, comparison with the entire development of early Indian art at Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati, especially the last.

That some of this sculpture must go back to the earliest period of Bharhut, though not many of them, is patently obvious.

To this earliest period, 150 B.C. or so, must belong the utterly primitive carvings in the Jayabijoya Cave.[4] The *yaksha* and *yakshī* figures at the entrance are identical in style with the rigid, clumsy relievoes of the Bharhut railing, even though the *yakshī* is shown in a light movement (like some of the *yakshīs* on the Bharhut railing). (Plate V, 1). The treatment of the feet is childish, of the hands quite clumsy, and if one observes a difference in so far as the feminine body is a much more slender than at Bharhut, this only connects this art with that of Andhra (Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda etc.), with which, as we shall see, Udayagiri has more affinity than with the North. Stockier figures occur on the scene of tree worship (perhaps the Kalpadruma is being represented as in so many Jain works), a piece of carving in every way as primitive as the most archaic phase at Bharhut (Plate V, 2). The composition has the symmetry and the "ribbon" development (in other words, a linear design, all the figures in one row) of the most archaic relievoes, and it would be difficult to date this later than 150 B.C.

Some portions of the two-storeyed and quite elaborate Rani Gumpha are far older than as many be expected, the extraordinary theory has been once advanced that the upper storey was excavated first and the lower later a supposition entirely helped by the style of the work in the lower sections. It is, to be true, obvious that a few parts have been chiselled at various times, *e.g.* I would not deny the possibility that the Scythian-looking booted and mantled warrior is a later addition, yet would hesitate very much to date the entire storey as necessarily belonging to the "Scythian period". Nothing prevents monks to carve one additional figure out of a rock that they had left formerly unfashioned.

But the bottom storey contains work as old as almost any in historic India, and some of the carvings must, on stylistical grounds, firmly datable

4. I am using here the local Oriya pronunciation. The pure Sanskrit would be Jayavijaya.

to the 2nd century B.C. To this period must belong the two corner chambers, of which one is illustrated in Plate VI, fantastic and inexplicable little works, with two doors each on two adjoining sides, both extremely low. The one shown in my plate was so narrow originally when both pilasters existed and "supported" the arch-shaped ornament, that at a later date one of the two pilasters, capital and all, was chipped away, leaving the "arch" suspended in air. The rest of the carving conjures up reminiscences of the rather involved relievo work at Bhaja, though this Rani Gumpha work is even more complicated, a fine mess of fantastic shapes, obviously redolent of the world of the jungle, rocks with caves and wild beasts, water-falls and trees and spirits and godlings of the untamed primordial world, elephants bathing in ponds, all conceived in an almost surrealistic juxtaposition. And dominating this entire and vast scene of the savage world of the unconquered jungle is a gigantic godling, holding a large wand or stick, and thus very likely qualifying as a kind of door-guard, a *dvārapāla,* a guardian of the shrine. Now the stylistic character of this godling is plainly completely archaic, as it possesses all the three characteristics of pure archaic art frontality, rigidity, symmetry. Indeed, in its primitive execution there is a simple grandeur that is almost staggering. For apart from the clumsy handling of the two feet, far too large, there is also in this mountainous figure a hidden feeling of strength and power, an other characteristic of much archaic work.

A few steps away from this great work of imagination and wild fantasia is a small cell that contains, among others, a frieze of more than ordinary interest. Between two false arches (leading to monks' chambers) is a representation of a *danseuse performing* in front of the *nepaṭyagṛiha* of the ancient dramatic texts, accompanied in her dance by a small orchestra consisting of two women drummers, one male harpist and a male flautist.

The little pavilion behind her is in every essential respect identical with the *nepaṭya-gṛiha* shown in an Ajanta mural painting, with surprisingly similar pillars supporting the superstructure. Here we are greatly helped in our dating by the fact that this superstructure is ornamented with the well-known *zikkurat* or stepped tower motif, imported from Mesopotamia and used only in the earliest monuments of Buddhism though a slightly altered form survives as late as about 600 A.D. even on that rather Buddhistic work of art, the Baital Deul. The movement of the danseuse is well caught, however primitive the work, and must be looked upon as the earliest extant representation of Orissi dancing. (Bharata mentions in his text-book, the *Nāṭya-śāstra,* that in his days there existed an Oḍhra-Māgadhī style of dancing—the earliest literary reference to Orissi). Clumsy as most of the other figures are, there is a

certain amount of liveliness attempted, once again reminding us much more of the art of Amaravati than of Bharhut ; the scene is alive, crowded and there is a distinct element of nobility in the erect dancing pose of the *nartakī*. If I am not mistaken, the right hand is in the *paṭākā-hasta*, a well-known hand-gesture of Orissi. She wears enormous ear-rings, not unlike some of the figures in the earliest murals in Ajanta (2nd century B.C.), and in order to suggest a vigorous movement, the ribbon-end of her head-dress flows in a lively manner behind her ear. Her hair is let down in two thick and separate plaits—a form I have proved many years ago to be the earliest hair style in India.

I am, on many grounds, inclined to date this relievo to the 2nd century B.C., perhaps to a date not far removed from 150 B.C. (Plate VII).

Of the numerous fascinating works in the lower storey of the Rani Gumpha I wish to draw attention to a small relievo here, illustrated in Plate VIII, which gives welcome information about contemporary architecture. What may seem at first sight to be a house of two storeys, is actually a representation of two mud huts, one behind the other lack of knowledge about perspective made the artist carve them one over the other. But these are two mud huts, both with thatched roofs, with doors and windows made of bamboo and the upper or farther one has a delightful indication of a hedge running round of it. (The Buddhist railing at the base does not belong to the first house, as it is a running motif for the entire carved frieze). "Women are peeping out curiously from their houses, both of which possess barrel roofs—for all the world like the top portion of the Baital Deul of Bhubaneshwar. These houses, and this carving, may belong to any time in the 1st or 2nd century B.C.

As soon as we go upstairs in the Rani Gumpha, we see a much more eloquent world, full of stories and legends and events to talk about a rich world of fairy tales and cautionary stories. It is true, that these vivacious and sometimes almost talkative friezes have never been explained or identified ; but as we interested in art, it makes little difference to us whether we can give a name to the heroes and heroines of these ancient relievo carvings. They possess, in fact, a very eloquent language of their own, and if you are only interested in the stories that they "illustrate", it would be wiser to read the stories rather than to look at the carvings.

To us, these friezes are an amazing testimony of the rapid advance in artistic expressiveness achieved by the Oriya sculptor in two or three hundred years. Closely akin in certain ways with Amaravati art of the 1st century A.D., these long narrative panels have a throbbing life of their own, in which movement has greatly been freed of its earlier clumsiness,

people are making violent gestures, step out boldly, flourish a sword and a shield, animals are infused with a new life, and almost anything is permitted—even complete nudity.

All the panels are placed between any two "arches" opening into cells of Jain monks and, as it is customary in India, should be "read" from left to right.

Take the splendidly vivacious panel shown in Plate IX, the story of an amazon. There is a bamboo-and-mud hut at the left, in front of which a slender and beautiful woman sits, whilst a man, sitting inside, leans out and fondles her thigh. Next you see the woman taking a club and there follows a less clearly seen personage, perhaps someone she meets in the forest or the road. The centre of the panel shows the woman, armed with a large shield and a broadsword bravely standing up and fighting a warrior similarly accoutred ; and evidently the amazon was defeated in this combat, for we see her being carried away, forcibly, on the right, by the victorious warrior in his arms and if I am not mistaken, she is kicking against her abduction.

The panel has some delightful elements of realism, or rather observation, such as the stepping out of the warrior, his right arm raised, holding the sword ; almost equally well done is the amazon, with slenderer legs, seen from behind, in a forward bending movement. The composition is the typical "ribbon" composition, reading from left to right, like a book ; it is a little muddled, space is not handled with the sensitivity we find later, in classical times, and it almost seems as if the sculptor had been anxious to tell all he knew, all he wanted to express.

This eloquent, or perhaps rather talkative, element is clearly in evidence in an other frieze, also from the verandah of the upper storey of the Rani Gumpha, reproduced in Plate X, the *Story of the Winged Deer.* To the left we see the arrival of a prince, whose riderless horse, splendidly carved, is held by a syce, whilst a fly-whisk bearer behind the horse and one with an umbrella symbolize royalty. The prince himself is seen in the act of drawing an arrow from his quiver, his outstretched arm holding the bow, ready to shoot a fleeing winged deer. But in the last scene, the raja is shown in the "gesture of reassurance", his bow lowered, in response to a spirit of a tree, a dryad, who holds out a protective, forbidding hand over the winged deer who had taken refuge under her tree. The last scene is so interesting that I am showing a separate enlargement of it, Plate XI, in which the dryad is seen, totally naked, with "not a stitch on her", as the saying goes, and her *pudenda* prominently emphasized. Her arms and legs are so entwined with the branches and the trunk of the tree that she seems to be truly part of the tree herself, her enormous hair in a vast coif apparently forming shapes almost like the fruits of the tree. She is

a true *vṛikshakā,* and the artist managed to make her appear almost as half tree, half woman. I would like to draw, finally, attention to her slender body and long limbs here again we are nearer to the Vengi school of Amaravati than to the more Northern and broader forms of feminine ideal.

We get some help in our dating of the upper cave from the figure of a Central Asian warrior, Iranian or Turanian, standing rather stiffly in a corner of the upper storey. Shown in Plate XII, this alien soldier wears high jackboots, a large *jama* or mantle, with border, held at the waist by some kind of belt, on which hangs a broadsword, quite different in shape from the swords wielded by the amazon and her adversary. Much of this figure has weathered, and details are difficult to see, but it is obvious that he wears no beard, and that his hair falls in parallel strands on to his shoulder. Not unlike some of the figures of Kushānas in Mathura, though not entirely identical, a date of the end of the 1st or the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. is a good conjecture. He has been described as a Scythian, a Hun or a Persian, for none of which identifications is there enough proof in detail.

As most of the relievo carvings in the vestibule of the first floor appear to belong to the 1st century A.D., on stylistical grounds, *i.e.* the same period as Amaravati in one of her phases, the appearance of a Central Asian of the Kushāna type falls neatly into place. It may be recalled that Kushāna coins were found in the ruins of Sisupalgarh, a few miles away.[5]

Stylistically interesting is a comparison of one other cave, that of the Ganesh Gumpha, with the Rani Gumpha, inasmuch as several relievo carvings deal with identical tales, legends or stories.

In Plate XIII one of these frieze panels from the vestibule of the Ganesh Gumpha is shown. The subject has never been explained, but the carving is clear enough. A soldier *dressed more or less like a Roman infantryman* with helmet, breastplate, and plaited skirt is seen leftmost, over the arch. There is some kind of assault by or catching an elephant run amok ; for a decorated cloth on the back of the beast clearly shows that it is a domesticated beast, perhaps a rutting bull. Excited creatures, to all appearance mainly women, appear on all sides, some with bows and arrows ; and, presumably, the elephant has been either subdued or tamed, for it seems that it meekly kneels down whilst a lady with a highly ornate and enormous coif of hair pets it on its forehead. To the right three personages walk away, one, may be, a child or a boy, the other two women ; and rightmost a slender-waisted woman with a vast hair-do is seen seated on a bed (?) in a contemplative attitude. Now an exactly identical theme

See *Ancient India*, No. 5 (1949), pp. 62ff.

is attacked by the artist in a panel in the verandah of the Rani Gumpha, seen in Plate XIV. As has been stated before, there is ample evidence that these friezes date to the 1st century A.D. in the Rani Gumpha ; the liveliness and vigour of the carving is vastly superior to the Ganesh Gumpha's almost static treatment of the theme ; here, in the cave of the Rani, everyone is in violent movement, modelled with an *élan* that bears close resemblance to the bold gesticulation of contemporary Amaravati work ; but in Plate XIII, in the Ganesh Gumpha, the archaic element is much more in evidence, the three personages hardly step out, ambling towards the right, whilst in the Rani Gumpha version the mother pulling away almost frantically the child is shown in a masterly fashion of vivacious movement. The elephants in the Rani Gumpha are also much more alive than those of the Ganesh Gumpha, and the highly raised arms of two women in the Rani Cave have nothing parallel in the Ganesh Cave. For these and similar reasons it is fair to conclude that the Ganesh Gumpha relievos date from the 1st century B.C.

A detailed treatment of the rock-cut carvings in the fifty odd caves at Udayagiri and Khandagiri would demand an entire book by itself ; and a book should, in fact, be written. There is no doubt at all that the earliest carvings, as has been shown, go back to the remotest period of Indian stone image making, certainly the 2nd century B.C., perhaps even the 3rd ; and that a careful examination of stylistical development allows us to distinguish clearly of a marked and growing mastery of form in works of the 1st century B.C. and those of the 1st century A.D. That the sculptors were highly gifted and sensitive people, cannot be doubted at all. These Jain caves compare well with contemporary work done at Amaravati and Sanchi ; though the strong tendency to depict slender women and men, mostly in lively gesticulation and full of vitality connects the work of Udayagiri much more with that of Andhra than with Bharhut and Sanchi.

As much of later period Jaina sculpture is marked by a quality of almost abstract formalism and rigid and frozen figures, the Jaina cave relievo of Udayagiri and Khandagiri stand out, with those of the Ellora group, as among the finest works produced by this community.

4

The "Buddhist Period" in Orissa

IT is an eloquent piece of evidence for the poor and undeveloped state of Orissan history and art history that there is a kind of "gap" between the period of Kharavela (perhaps 1st century B.C.) and the historical dynasties of the Gaṅgas and Bhaumas (6th century and after) about which our knowledge is the scantiest. These seven hundred years or more of tantalizing ignorance are the more strange, as copper-plate grants after the "gap" abound; in fact, they run into several hundred, and, with the exception perhaps of one or two, belonging to such subordinate petty rulers as the Tuṅgas,[1] none of them ever mentions Buddhism. Hundreds of villages and large lands are donated by munificent kings and princes and their wives to support Brahmans and their temples; but as far as I know, there is not one gift to a Buddhist establishment during all these seven hundred years—and ever after.

This painful silence cannot be explained easily. Evidence is available, and increases almost every year, that this long and significant period saw a great flourishing of Buddhism; Buddhist images of this period, and long after, are found scattered all over Orissa, up and down the whole

1. Mahtab, *HoO*, I, p. 153.

country, testifying to a great and rich community of Buddhists, from the 3rd century A.D. at least to the 13th century A.D. An enormous establishment, obviously the result of lavish donations over many centuries, such as the Mahāvihāra of Ratnagiri, most necessarily be assumed to have existed in the midst of a numerous and well-to-do community of Buddhists, and to be dependent for daily alms on a town nearby so large as to support with ease a Buddhist monastic compound of many buildings, and housing numerous monks.

The extensive Buddhist remains at Mayurbhanj, the obviously widespread cult of Buddhism in Baudh (mark the Buddhist name of the town and the State), the equally patently large ruins yet to be excavated at Ganiapalli in Sambalpur District, the hundreds of Buddhist images excavated or just found in places as far apart as Patnagarh in Bolangir, or Baripada and Balasore, demand an explanation. What can be the reason for this great silence about seven or twelve hundred years of Buddhist cult ? Buddhist scripture and references in Jātakas and later Buddhist writings have ample hints about a great flowering of Buddhist teachings in Kaliṅga or Orissa ; we know the names of some of the most renowned preachers and holy men of Buddhism who found it incumbent on them to visit the monastic establishments of this State ; Hiuan Tsang as late as 638 A.D. found about one hundred monasteries and ten thousand monks of the Buddhist faith when he visited Orissa ; and even in Kaliṅga there were still 10 monasteries and 500 monks in the south—and that in the 7th century A.D.

When the evidence of actual remains and of literary allusions is so eloquent, the silence of historical records, especially inscriptions in stone, and copper-plate grants, can have several explanations.

First of all, it is possible that such copper-plate grants and inscriptions are still lying buried in the ground and will be found in the future. There is no gain-saying that Orissa has been woefully neglected archaeologically, and that the entire State has never seen a major excavation project. Small excavations, lasting a season or two, have been done at sites such as Sisupalgarh and now Ratnagiri, whilst less expert, sometimes even amateurish, diggings were made by enterprising and brave people not properly backed either by funds, or by expert assistance from the central Archaeological Department. Such were, to mention only one, the digs at Mayurbhanj, when it was a princely State, and where considerable sites await the spade of the learned archaeologist. This neglect can also be seen in the fact that some of the most valuable and unique monuments, such as those at Ranipur-Jharial, remain unprotected ; as a result of which numerous images have disappeared from the Temple of the 64 Yoginis and the unparalleled brick temple is in a sad state of neglect.

Among the vast sites to be excavated must be reckoned the extensive town near Sita Bhinji, the mound on which the Bhāskareśvara Temple stands at Bhubaneshwar, the ruins at Ganiapalli and many others. That some of these would yield written material is highly probable ; even the brief excavations of two short seasons at Ratnagiri brought to light some epigraphs.

Yet the second, not totally improbable explanation must also be considered, even if evidence is wellnigh impossible to find. After all, we do possess an extraordinary painted proof that the followers of Chaitanya physically persecuted the Buddhists, in a mural painting in the Jagannātha temple at Puri perhaps the only piece of pictorial evidence of religious intolerance and actual violence against a rival faith in ancient India.

Is it, then, possible that Vaishnava enthusiasm at one time was so violent that it did not hesitate to wipe out many of the vestiges of much hated Buddhism ? If they went so far as to murder and decapitate Buddhists, is it not possible that they sequestrated their lands, their donated villages, their monastic establishments and their temples ? There is enough evidence to show that in a number of Hindu temples both Śaiva and Vaishnava, bricks of earlier Buddhist shrines have been re-used, as in the Kosaleśvara Temple at Baidyanath or the small temple discovered by this writer in 1961 at the village of Mahadevapalli, near Laida, District Sambalpur. The evidence is not much, but it is significant enough to be considered as a working hypothesis.

There are, nevertheless, some difficulties in accepting this second explanation as a *total* explanation of the silence regarding Buddhism from the 1st century A.D. to the 13th. There is the patent fact that some Buddhist establishments, notably Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitagiri, flourished at least as late as the 12th, may be in the 13th century A.D. ; many of the images at Mayurbhanj suggest an undisturbed existence of Buddhism around Khiching (ancient Khijjiṅga) into the 12th century and Mahāyāna images of many centuries can be found up and down the whole of Orissa. One possible explanation would be that any persecution of the Buddhists would have been (a) later than this period, and (b) never quite effective enough to wipe out Buddhism altogether. Many a religion thrives on persecution, to be sure, and brings out more fervent ardour in the few followers.

There is, moreover, a third explanation for the unnatural silence on Buddhism in Orissa that may be considered here, and that may also offer an explanation of the coexistence of flourishing Buddhist and Brahmanic establishments from the 8th to the 13th centuries ; it is the possibility that Buddhism was not mentioned in princely copper-plates for the simple reason that the rulers and the ruling classes adhered to the

Brahmanic faith, and Buddhism flourished among the other classes. Such possibility can be envisaged up to a point. In Orissa there was, to mention only one matter, a rich and opulent merchant class, people who traded with the Indianized countries of Farther Asia, Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, the Indonesian archipelago and what was formerly known as Indo-China. We know quite a lot about the constant voyages of traders from the great ports of Orissa to, say, Suvarna-dvīpa, "The Golden Isle", and the tales, *e.g.* of the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* leave you in no possible doubt that there was fortune in this overseas trade, and that merchants returned laden with riches. That these "klings" (Kalingans, the Malay name for *all* Indians) were ready to donate freely out of their gains to their religious establishments, is not beyond likelihood ; indeed, the explanation would also hold good if many of them had been Hindus. For here would be a possible reason to justify the existence of seven hundred temples at Bhubaneshwar a number that has never been explained satisfactorily so far. Is it not possible to contemplate that these adventurous tradesmen, in their frail craft of a few tons, tossed and buffeted on the mighty waves of the sea, in times of peril would promise their gods to make a donation "if ever you bring me safely out of this peril" ? It is interesting to remark here that one of the eight perils, against which the Buddhist goddess Tārā is the protectress, is shipwreck. Numerous images of Tārā have been found in Orissa, one in Ajudhya, one at Ratnagiri, where a scene of shipwreck is actually illustrated in relief carving. (Cp. Plate LIX).[2]

If, then, Buddhism had no great adherents among the warrior class, the *kshatriyas,* the ruling princes, to whom its gentleness and peace-loving did not appeal, it is not a totally unlikely conjecture that it was the rich merchant class that supported Buddhism during the many hundred years of its flowering in Orissa.

Even that does not explain the astonishing silence about Buddhism over a period of seven or eight hundred years.

But it must be emphasized here that Buddhism must have been the prevailing religion for at least six hundred years in Orissa. To speak of a "Buddhist period in Orissa" appears to be entirely justified ; for the very simple but potent reason that there is not one monument, not one sculpture of the Hindu religion belonging to this period. As far as I know, *every find of the first six centuries A.D. in Orissa is Buddhist, with a few Jain images making a small exception.*

Some people object to such a distinction on the ground that there is no

2. This point may not be a very good argument alone, in isolation, but it is worth considering that the shipwreck scene is carved with separate reason and dramatic power.

difference between Buddhist and Hindu art at a given period. Whatever the contents, the stylistical form is identical at one and the same time.

There is a great deal of truth in this contention, and one can point out numerous images in the same century or half-century, some Buddhist, some Hindu, carved in a *style* of absolute identity. This is true of late Buddhist images most of all, because it was at that time that a revival of Hinduism and the creation of an almost new Hindu pantheon occurred at the same time as the creation of a vast Buddhist pantheon.

But the strange thing is exactly this that *in Orissa this general truth does no hold altogether.* Hindu, Śaiva and Vaishnava images occur from about 700 A.D. onwards, and their style and formal execution is vastly inferior to the Buddhist images made at the same period. In the 7th century A.D. Buddhist art just turned from mannerism to the baroque, and created masterpieces of exquisite formal perfection and decorative charm; grace and elegance characterize every image in the 7th and 8th centuries, which, even if they show gradually more and more affectation and exaggeration, are permeated with a love of enchanting beauty of form.

But the early carvings at, say the Baitāl Deul and the Paraśurāmeśvara, or the almost contemporary figures of the Siṁhanātha Temple of the Island, have nothing of this elegant sophistication, this superior sensitivity to decorative charm. In their almost primitive simplicity they have a strong element of archaic clumsiness, although based or more elaborate and developed forms the Buddhist imagery that went before it. This "clumsy" period of Brahmanic art may not have lasted long, and I would, tentatively, put it at approximately a hundred years; for by the time we come to temples of the delightful grace and loveliness of the Mukteśvara at Bhubaneshwar, the Brahmanic craftsman has not only acquired all the necessary skill, he also possesses the most sophisticated and sensuous elegance of style.

The reason for this difference in style between Buddhist and Brahmanic images of the same period in this State is not very difficult to find. Buddhist art was a lively, militant, intensely felt art, growing out of its own roots from the times of Aśoka to the flowering in the Gupta times (320—500 A.D.), and it was wildly alive when its practitioners turned away from the severer classic forms to mannerism in the 6th and 7th centuries, or changed gradually into the sensuous, luxury-loving, profuse elaboration of a most enchanting baroque in the 8th to 12th centuries. In these late centuries it was precisely *skill* and *cleverness* that were the outstanding characteristics of Buddhist baroque : calculated effect-catching, intense sensitivity for decorative treatment, a love of ornamental elegance and riches.

But when the Hindus of Orissa turned to temple-building and image-carving, they had no past. There does not seem to exist any evidence

whatsoever of any Hindu temple architecture before the first temples of Bhubaneshwar—the Ek-āmra country—were raised, perhaps in the middle of the 7th century A.D. It is very difficult to argue from the non-existence of remains, but negative evidence is so strong that one is justified, at this stage, in such a pioneer treatment of Orissan art, to conclude that Brahmanic temples were not built first, but that Buddhist shrines of that time were gradually adapted to Hindu worship. Dr N. K. Sahu may well be right[3] that perhaps the earliest known temple in the whole of Orissa is the temple at Baidyanath : and if that is true this is an outstanding example of a Buddhist shrine having been converted into a Hindu temple. There could not be a better example of the transition from Buddhist brick structure to Hindu carved stone architecture.

It follows, hence, that whilst the architects were able craftsmen and could erect small but sturdy structures to house the sacred images of Hinduism, the sculptors were struggling with new problems, unknown to their Buddhist predecessors. This difference is so important that it is necessary to explain it here in some detail.

That veteran archeologist of Orissa, Mr P. Acharya, rejects the expression "Buddhist brick", and insists that brick and stone were equally used by Hindus and Buddhists. But is that so ?

There is overwhelming evidence that brick was the material of Buddhist monastic and religious architecture *par excellence* from the times Aśoka erected his brick stūpas. The essential fabric of Buddhist monasteries, as at Nalanda in Bihar, at Paharpur in Bengal, or at Ratnagiri in Orissa, was brick ; and this can be the more understood, because in early Hinayāna times image worship did not exist at all ; and when, in later Buddhism, a growing rôle was allowed for carved images, it was a slow process, and the image always remained an *additional* element in Buddhist art ; an image may be installed inside an existing monk's cell (there are numerous examples of this at Taxila and Nalanda), or niches are created in the brick wall, suited for housing the stone carving ; but the walls remain brick for many centuries.

Even when image-making becomes of great importance in Mahāyāna times, the tradition survives that walls must be made of bricks, and that images are housed in niches and cells specially provided in the brick wall never do Buddhists create entire walls adorned with endless stone carving. At Ratnagiri, in the latest period, a stone *revetment* has been erected in front of the brick wall. But, strangely enough, this revetment is hardly adorned with images or carved with scenes. It remains plain, and niches are provided to house the sculpture.

3. N. K. Sahu, *BiO*, p. 185.

The character of the Orissan Hindu temples is basically different, from the beginning. As soon as the Orissan Hindu temple appears, say around 650 A.D., it is not only made entirely of stone, with very few exceptions, but it is carved profusely, as it becomes the period, with sculptural and ornamental decoration. Though there are a few, mostly ruined, temples earlier than the Paraśurāmeśvara, the Paraśurāma may be taken as the finest representative and the most typical of the period. It is, perhaps, relevant to quote the notes I made when I made an early study of its surface decoration some years ago

> "A disorderly, untidy, inorganic arrangement of haphazardly juxtaposed motifs, repetitive, as if the artist had run out of ideas chaitya-window over chaitya-window, of all sizes and shapes, sometimes half of it only with perforated screen (jālī) on one side—or two—with no attempt at symmetry or even arranging panels on a straight line. An amateurish or provincial artist at work ? or one who had just *started,* having turned away from Buddhism, to *invent* suitable motifs for a Hindu temple ?"

And Mrs Debala Mitra speaks[4] of "a remarkable catholicity, a host of deities of the Brahmanical pantheon,

> including Śiva, Sūrya, dancing Ardhanārīśvara, Śiva-Pārvatī, Hari-Hara, Yama, Varuṇa, Gaṅgā, Yamunā and the Mātrikās and Lakuliśa . . ."

all that in one single panel of the *jagamohana.* Inorganically crowded, they demand endless sculptural space there can be no question here of a brick wall, with an occasional niche or recess made to hold a single image.

Here then—as in so many other examples—is the reason why Buddhist, could use brick, well into the late Mahāyāna period, but Brahmanic *śilpins* turned altogether to stone masonry. Very rarely, no doubt, they employed brickwork too never more successfully and effectively than in the superb vimāna-temple on the rock of Ranipur-Jharial, a masterpiece of strange and haunting quality, difficult to explain. Of the few other brick structures erected by Brahmanic temple-builders, I ought to include the strangest of all, the sober and severely unadorned brick temple at Patpur (about 3 km from Banpur), but of which it is impossible to say whether it was Buddhist (Tāntric) or Brahmanic (Tāntric) the very temple is an eloquent testimony of the simple fact that an unsculptured

4. Debala Mitra *Bhubaneswar,* p. 26.

surface on a temple makes it almost unintelligible. Unembellished brick walls can be Buddhist; they have no meaning, as it were, for a Brahmanic temple of the 7th century or later. Unadorned walls were used by the Hindus—as they were by the Buddhists—in the classical period, when simplicity and restrained moderation marked the style; but all the Orissan temples are of the mannerist and baroque period, and this age demanded profusion in ornamentation. Brick, therefore, was no more a suitable material.

Here, then, is a period of some seven hundred years during which, with very few exceptions, all art in Orissa was Buddhist, and almost all the exceptions belong to the Jainas, not to the Hindus. It would be splendid to be able to give a connected account of this long period of artistic activity unfortunately, this is at present entirely impossible. The only major monument belonging to these seven hundred long years so far unearthed is the Mahāvihāra of Ratnagiri and the surrounding structures, stūpas and monasteries; even Ratnagiri, with its long history from the 6th to the 13th centuries, leaves us in the dark about the first six hundred years A.D.

This lack of materials is a matter for profound regret; the more so, as there is ample evidence that numerous other Buddhist ruins lie scattered all over Orissa, never properly reconnoitred, let alone excavated.

All that we possess of this period are fragments, isolated sculptures discovered here and there—and Ratnagiri—and on this slender evidence must be built up the next chapters.[5]

5. It has been inferred that the Bhauma-kara dynasty, or at least some members of the family, were Buddhists. The inference is mainly based on some such titles as "Paramopāsaka" or "Sugatāsraya". Strangely enough, not one of the many copper-plate grants mentions any actual donation to a Buddhist establishment, though numerous gifts to Brahmans are detailed in these grants. Cp. Mahtab, *HoO,* I, pp. 134—145.

5

Early Buddhist Art

UP TO a few years ago the earliest Buddhist remains known in Orissa—excluding Aśoka's—were, probably, not earlier than the 8th century A.D. These Mahāyāna images, scattered about up and down the State, were well known for a number of generations. They included the surface finds on the triple hills of Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Alatigiri (or Lalitagiri), the much later finds on the Baneshwarnasi hill and isolated images found here and there, as at Ajudhya.

With the excavations at Ratnagiri (two seasons' work, 1959-60 and 1960-61) the history of Buddhist art in Orissa has been pushed back, as it were, by another two hundred years ; for the earliest images at Ratnagiri cannot date from much later than the 6th century A.D., as we shall see.

However, during my tour of exploration in 1961 in the Sambalpur District I have been fortunate enough to find two images at least that go back much farther in history than the 6th century ; and this discovery, happily, indicates that the history of Buddhist art in Orissa can, and no doubt will, one day be much more complete than it is now.

The tiny village of Ganiapalli lies about 8 km from Melchamunda, a larger settlement in the Bargarh Sub-division of Sambalpur District. The oldest inhabitants clearly remember that the two images referred to were found, accidentally, almost exactly where they are erected now, in the field

by some farmers. The Zamindar of Borasambar, so they told me, wanted to take the two images away, but the local peasants protested, and, on their insistence, the Zamindar erected on the spot a small shrine to house the two "Buddhas". One is now worshipped as "Siddhārtha-muṇi" (The Sage Siddhārtha Buddha) and the other as "Nāga-muṇi" (The Serpent Sage).

As will be seen in Plate XV these two old masterpieces of Buddhist sculpture are now in a disgraceful state, almost beyond recognition. They have been "mended" by some local artisan who not only restored the missing hands (wrongly, to be sure) in fancied positions, but also smothered a good deal of the images with even more fanciful cement additions, such as a moustache, or, in the case of the left hand image, he replaced the original lotus leaves of a *padmāsana* (Lotus Seat) with serpent coils, so as to make it similar to the right hand image, which, indeed, originally sat on the coils of the serpent Muchalinda.

But a careful scrutiny *in situ* revealed what can also be discerned, at least partially, in the photograph, that we have to deal here with two most ancient images of the classical period, under no circumstances likely to be later than the 5th century A.D.

On the left side the image is a Buddha in the pose of the First Sermon at Sarnath—probably the only one so far known in Orissa—and the hands, now resting in the lap, originally rose in the teaching *mudrā*. Even in the picture it can be seen that the base is decorated with a *dharmachakra*, the Wheel of the Teaching, or Good Law, flanked on two sides by what can be seen *in situ* to be two deer typical symbols of the Deer Park in which the Master preached his First Sermon after his enlightenment. The oval halo is either entirely new, or so smothered with modern cement that the original cannot be guessed; but the moustache can be wished away, and it appears that the head was one of those admirable, peaceable heads that preceded only slightly the classical Gupta period. The body, the shoulders and the arms as well as the trunk, are excellently proportioned and well moulded, and if the local inhabitants could be persuaded to restore this image to its original shape, we would, no doubt, have a lovely piece of work of the early Gupta period. Though some of this is necessarily hypothetical, the essence is doubtlessly correct, and is based on a detailed examination of the image on the spot.

The right hand image is a Muchalinda Buddha, and the coils of the benevolent and worshipful Serpent King are genuine, though clumsily smoothed out by a cement layer on top of it. The *ushnīsha* (top-knot of hair) is badly repaired, but much of the rest of the image shows a fair proportion of its original condition. The coils of the serpent on which the Buddha is seated in meditation have been superficially repaired, but the originals are visible.

Now it is interesting to observe that Muchalinda Buddhas are not frequent in India, certainly much less frequent than in the Buddhist colonies of South-East Asia Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia or Indo-China. As in the case of Agastya, it is difficult to say why figures of moderate popularity in India had become so much favoured in oversea colonies; but the fact remains that Muchalinda Buddhas in India are rare, and the occurrence of one in North-West Orissa is a matter for wonder.

One also wonders whether the name of the neighbouring village, Melchamunda, has anything to do with Muchalinda. I have made extensive enquiries about the meaning of Melchamunda, and have received two explanations, both unlikely, and, in any case, mutually exclusive. One explanation was that *mel* means a unit, and Chāmuṇḍā is the name of the well-known goddess. This makes no sense at all, and, moreover, the *a* in Melchamunda is short. Nor is the goddess worshipped in the village. The other explanation of the village name is even more fanciful. *Melcha* in Oriya is a castrated goat, and *muṇḍa* is the name of a small, blocked-up waterway or dam. Against these meaningless etymologies stands the simple possibility, conjectural, but not fanciful, that Melchamunda is a slight local distortion of Muchalinda.

Whilst this etymological game is of little importance, the fact of the two 5th century images at Ganiapalli is of outstanding value; the more so, as the surrounding area is rich in other indications of an erstwhile Buddha establishment of no mean size.

Just in front of the modern shrine in which the Zamindar of Borasambar housed the two Buddha-images, are ruins of a small stone maṇḍapa with two broken pillars, the shapes of which can still be recognized as very early and undecorated, with their bases and some parts of moulding—all of extreme classical simplicity. Around the new shrine are many signs of ancient brickwork, the bricks measuring as much as 14″×8″×2½″ (36 × 20 × 7 cm), whilst others are smaller, and are likely to belong to a later period. None seem to me to be smaller than 9″×8″×3″ (23 × 20 × 8 cm approximately), so that the sizes of these bricks also indicate very early construction, before and during the Gupta period.*

Not more than 200 paces away there are further ruins visible on the surface. These are a very large number of stone fragments of all sizes and shapes, some of them clearly recognizable as faces, one seated, one standing figure, others as limbs of one time images. And as the bricks and fragments of the bricks spread almost continuously from the Mucha-

* For comparison it may be mentioned that Kushāna period bricks vary from 14 to 14½″ by 9 to 9½″ by 2½ to 3″—so that the Ganiapalli early bricks are typically Kushāna sizes.

linda shrine to this pile of stone ruins, it is justifiable to conclude that we have here a very large ancient establishment underground, with a considerable life, perhaps from the early centuries of this era to about the 5th or 6th century A.D.

Ganiapalli, hence, not only demands the spade of the trained archaeologist, it promises to reveal the hitherto earliest remains of Buddhist worship in Orissa; and that in a tract of this State formerly believed to have been mainly a vast jungle, with no notable civilization before the 15th century. "There are no monuments worth the name which can be assigned to a date earlier than the 15th century A.D. at Sambalpur", states categorically the *Orissa Monuments Special* of the *Orissa Review.*

But to this most valuable novel find must be added two more, both of utmost importance to bridge the "gap". Neither of them is as old as the Ganiapalli remains, but both indicate rich possibilities of discovering more Buddhist finds in this remote, and hitherto hardly explored District, Sambalpur. One is a miniature temple in a village never noticed before, as far as I know; and the other no more than four pillars in a monument otherwise well known.

The little temple is called Shivji-mandir and is situated in the small village of Mahadevapalli, about 4 km beyond Laida (or Laira), a village 32 miles (about 46 km) from Sambalpur town. (Plate XVI). It has no roof. The tower of the *vimāna* has collapsed, but fortunately two fragments at least of the crowning member, the *āmalaka,* are seen as they fell down; this is a small piece of carved *āmalaka,* so that one can guess how slight the height of the *śikhara* must have been. The present *maṇḍapa* is newer than the rest, but built on the old foundations; in fact, both *vimāna* and maṇḍapa have an unusually high base. This, I presume, is due to the fact that under the floor of both lie the ruins of an earlier Buddhist shrine.

Very large bricks, some measuring 25×20×5 cm (10″×8″×2″) lie not only around, but have been incorporated in the original fabric of the temple, in such a manner that one course of stone masonry is alternating with two courses of bricks obviously a measure of economy, well indicated in a very small temple, raised by some modest donation, and using ancient material lying about.

The outlines of the temple are of the simplest. The *maṇḍapa* has practically no articulation (the porch is entirely new and nothing to do with the old shrine), and the *vimāna* is moderately facetted, suggesting a very early date. Uncertain as all this must be, in the present state of the temple, and all sculptural ornament gone, including the *pārśvadevatās* originally placed in the three niches on the outside, I suggest that a date of the 7th century, or, perhaps early 8th, would be justified. This would

fall, then, into the period when Buddhism was receding and Brahmanic revivalism was getting the upper hand. The interesting mixing of the two materials, brick and stone, in the masonry, has, to my knowledge, no parallel. (Plate XVI).

The other monument in the Sambalpur District is the much better known Narsinghnath Temple, built at the source of the Papaharini River, next to a delightful waterfall, close to the rocks where the river takes its origin. This temple has been noticed a number of times, partly because it has an inscription on which scholars have been in disagreement. All doubt, however, seems to be put to rest with a learned article by Mr K. N. Mahapatra,[1] who, in full agreement with a previous scholar, comes to the conclusion that the inscription is dated in what corresponds to the 17th March 1413 A.D.

But whilst a great deal of learning has been spent on the dating of this interesting epigraph, it appears that the previous authors have not noticed that neither the two carved stone door frames on the outside, nor the four remarkable stone pillars within the *maṇḍapa* can possibly date from so late a period. They are both centuries older than the inscription, and must have belonged to some previous structure and re-used when King Vaijala II had his inscription incized in the wall of the new temple.

No one, anywhere in India, carved doorjambs or pillars like those in the 15th century. Style and craftsmanship, shape and decoration belong to a much earlier period.

Even constructionally, it is out of the ordinary to find in Orissa a *maṇḍapa* supported from within by four internal pillars. This kind of arrangement is common at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh, but there are very few examples in Orissa, and every one of those examples belongs to the earliest period of temple architecture. Most famous of all is, to be sure, the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple at Bhubaneshwar, the flat-roofed *maṇḍapa* which contains six internal pillars ; as is well known, this is one of the earliest temples in the whole of Orissa, and its date can hardly be later than 650 A.D. There is not a single temple either in Orissa or in Madhya Pradesh with pillars supporting the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* datable to the 15th century. The other famous example, the Kosaleśvara Temple of Baidyanath, belongs to a much earlier date. (About this temple more will be said in this chapter).

Another notable feature of this *maṇḍapa* is that it had three doors—two remains with handsomely carved stone door-jambs and lintels—and this too is a most rare feature of Orissan temples, occurring only in a few, very early structures. Once again we are reminded of the Paraśurāmeś-

1. *OHRJ.*, III, 3 (1954), pp. 137—145, especially p. 143.

vara Temple and the almost contemporary Temple of Siṁhanātha on the island, and one is gradually driven to the conclusion that this type of *maṇḍapa* construction suggests a period before the full development of the typical Orissan temple form around 700 A.D.

Unfortunately, the temple has been recently modernized, and the picture in Plate XVII is rather misleading; at least, at first sight. There is modern terrazzo-work round the base of the four pillars, and the floor is laid with 20th century coloured tiles. Even the deity has been changed, for it was formerly, we are told, Marjara-kesarī, a form of Vishṇu with the head of a cat and the body of a lion. The present images are poor copies of Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Balabhadra. [The Pārsva-devatās in the outside niches are three avatāras of Vishṇu Varāha (the Boar), Narasiṁha (the Man-Lion) and Vāmana (the Dwarf avatāra). They are still in position, and seem to be 11th century work.]

It is when one takes a closer look at the four pillars (Plate XVIIIa) that the antiquity of the basic fabric strikes the discerning observer. These superbly carved brownish-red stone pillars, with their dignified simplicity of outline and admirably organized ornamentation belong, without a shadow of doubt, to the early post-classic period, hardly beyond the Gupta times, and must be reckoned as among the finest examples of mannerist art. That their date is to all practical purposes the same as that of the Baitāl Deul, is instantly evident to anyone well acquainted with that monument at Bhubaneshwar. A glance at Plate XVIIIb will convince anyone that every element in the Narsinghnath pillars is similar or entirely identical with those on the two pilasters flanking the niche on the Baitāl Deul example; and further reflection will suggest that we have here essentially Buddhist motifs, recently taken over by an incipient Brahmanic art. Many of them, notably the elegant lotus and the highly styled creeper, disappear or change considerably in the subsequent centuries, and even the capital of the pillar, the *maṅgala-kalaśa,* the Vase of Plenty, overflowing with rich plant fertility, changes from the dignified simplicity of the Narsinghnath example to ever more evolved forms.

If, then, constructionally the *maṇḍapa* at Narsinghnath reminds one of that of the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple (*c.* 650 A.D.), the pillars bear the closest family resemblances in shape and style of ornament to the Baitāl Deul, which, as will be seen later in the following pages, is to be assigned to some craftsmen rather different from those who created the Paraśurāma, though of the same period. The Baitāl Deul has been variously assigned to an age slightly prior to that of the Paraśurāma, whilst others incline to date it slightly later. As will be seen below, this author considers it to be the work of erstwhile Buddhist Tāntric artists, influenced by Dravidian stylistic movements, just as it is surprising to find a

Dravidian style shrine outside the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs at Ranipur-Jharial; but a date later than 600 to 650 A.D. is stylistically impossible.

The four pillars of the Narsinghnath Temple near Padampur can thus be assigned to a period when Buddhism was on the decline and Vaishnavism gained ground; there is a strong suspicion that the pillars originally belonged to a Buddhist temple, for pillars were great favourites with Buddhist monastic builders, witness Ratnagiri. Be that as it may, these four superbly decorated, mannerist pillars must belong to the same period as the Baitāl Deul and the Paraśurāmeśvara, *viz.* about 600 to 650 A.D.

The doorframes need no detailed description here. They are handsome examples of late but elegant baroque, and can be assigned to the 11th century. The carving of the Yamunā and Gaṅgā and the *dvārapālas* (doorkeepers) is excellent, and there is an equally well executed *gelbāi,* creeper with human beings, interwined with floral design, the most attractive and original speciality of Orissan decorative art. The grace and delicate beauty of the two goddesses on the west side door make a date of the 15th century absolutely impossible; these are admirable works of art from the heyday of baroque sculpture. (Plate XVIIIb).

It may be mentioned here that, oddly enough, the goddess Gaṅgā is on the left side, with her *makara,* though the usual side is the right. Attempts have been made to identify the two doorkeepers next to the two river goddesses as Naṇḍi and Mahākāla, or as Bhṛiṅgi and Mahākāla. Both identifications are uncertain and, like so many of these iconographic details, of very moderate interest.

There is no indication whatsoever that either of these two handsomely carved doorframes are Buddhist. They are entirely different from the four pillars inside the *maṇḍapa.* They are made of a very dark grey stone, whereas those of the pillars are reddish-brown; the carving is technically and stylistically different too.

It is, however, important to say a few words about the temple itself. Covered with a thick layer of whitewash, applied, I am told, every year on top of the old, it is difficult to see what the fabric hides. But there can be little doubt that the small figures of *sundarīs* (belles) on the *vimāna* tower belong to a good period, and may well be of the same age as the doorframes. Unable to provide final evidence without removing the thick strata of whitewash, I venture to conjecture that the entire temple belongs to the 11th century, doorframe and tower; and that only the *maṇḍapa* with its four pillars is a more ancient structure, re-used in the new temple, when the Buddhists were succeeded by Vaishnavas. The 15th century inscription would, thus, be a later addition, perhaps at the time

the temple was rebuilt or renovated. And the floorwork in the sanctum is a 20th century renovation the ugliest of all.[2]

As can be concluded, Buddhist remains belonging to the great "gap" are few. Much of it must lie under the ground, as in the sizeable town near Sita Bhinji where a 5th century rock painting and extensive brick walls around it suggest a rich harvest for the archaeologist's spade, or in the neighbourhood of Khiching, where Buddhist monasteries appear to have existed.[3] Kupari too, 42 miles sw of Balasore town, may hold old Buddhist remains, and already Beglar suggested that there were ancient Buddhist ruins at Belkhandi-Rajapader, at the confluence of the rivers Tel and Utei, about 50 miles from Bhavanipatna, where inscriptions in fragments have been found, containing letters of the 2nd-3rd centuries A.D. In 1947 Mr K. N. Mahapatra carried out some diggings here, but nothing relating to art of historical importance of the Buddhist period has been found so far.

There is only one thing at Kupari very much worth noticing even without excavations. The date of this structure is quite unknown, and judging from the much smaller pillared hall at Sisupalgarh, it might be as old as the 1st century B.C. or again it might be three or four hundred years later. Nothing positive can be said about this impressive stone building (Plate XIX) made of the same stone of which almost the whole area consists ("like a London pavement", as an early British observer wrote) except that it is essentially different from Brahmanic architecture. As will be observed all through this book, Hindu architecture in Orissa is basically astylar ; it does not employ columns. The few exceptions have already been pointed out, and are not only extremely rare, but belong all to the earliest period. The conclusion, hence, is justified to see in any colu-

2. D. R. Bhandarkar, in an article published in the *Annual Report of the A.S.I. for 1904-05*, pp. 121ff. gave a detailed examination of the monument, without observing that (1) the four-pillared shrine was unusual or (2) the four pillars belonged to a much earlier period. His dates have all been overruled now, including his ascription of the epigraph to 1359-60 A.D. But he, quite correctly, realized that the inscription was a later insertion, "stuck into" the wall ; and says, "The inscription says that the temple of Narasiṁhanātha was built by Vejaladeva, but we are aware of many instances of kings and chiefs speaking of themselves as having erected temples when they merely reconstructed them or some parts of them, so that it is by no means certain whether Vejaladeva actually built, or simply rebuilt, the temple, or, what is highly probable, the *jagamohana,* which, as it stands, is doubtless a modern construction".—Bhandarkar also thinks that on the door the two figures are not *dvārapālas* but figures of Shiva, whilst on the N door he identifies them as doorkeepers flanked by female chaurī-bearers.

3. At Viratgarh, probably the old Vairātapura, 1 km from Khiching, bricks measure 37×23×6 cm.

mniation a Buddhist architect's working method, as columns are widely used in Buddhist monasteries and even temples, in Orissa as elsewhere. The use of columns in caves is again, firstly, based on earlier Buddhist practice, and, secondly, was structurally necessary; it was not carried over into Hindu temple architecture by any means as extensively as into Buddhist.

If this large columniated hall—the minimum number of pillars it must have contained may be calculated as 20—is indicative of Buddhist building practice, it may also hint at much lost architectural art. Kupari may not yield much to the archaeologist's spade, because most of the ground is hard, solid rock, and can hide no remains; but even so a systematic clearing would be most valuable and would cost very little.

The reference to Sisupalgarh is interesting in more ways than one. It is patently obvious that early Jaina art was extremely similar to early Buddhist art; even the images of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras (Saints) and Buddhas can hardly—in a few cases not all—be distinguished from each other, and the cave architecture and sculpture at Udayagiri-Khandagiri is so similar to Buddhist cave art that numerous scholars have thought (some insisted) that Buddhists must have been at work here. It is now known that the caves are Jaina.

If, then, Sisupalgarh was, as is more than hypothetical, the capital of the emperor Kharavela, one would expect there architecture resembling Buddhist stylar work. I do not believe that the columniated structure at Sisupalgarh can be earlier than the 3rd century A.D.—Kushāna coins testify that the site remained inhabited at least to that century, probably later—but whatever its date, it may well be expected to look like much Buddhist work; and the Kupari Hall of Columns here illustrated seems, on the ground of the simplicity of the pillars, an earlier work. More than these few conclusions cannot be said about it.

But before we turn to the most important Buddhist remains at Ratnagiri, we ought to discuss here another monument of utmost interest and singular beauty, belonging to the period of transition. This is, in many ways, one of the earliest temples of the Hindus; but as it is built, evidently, as a kind of transformation of an earlier Buddhist shrine, it deserves to be treated in this chapter.

This is the Kosaleśvara Temple at Baidyanath, District Bolangir, near Baudh—the centre of Bauddhas. Situated on the shore of the Tel River, Baidyanath is about 9 km from Sonepur town. The *vimāna* of the temple is altogether ruined, if there ever was one—which is not quite certain.* What is referred to as the *mukha-śālā* is a self-contained temple

* Some foundations are visible.

of the most unusual style, and though it might have been the *maṇḍapa* of a larger temple, there is not much evidence for that, and it is not at all impossible that this shrine stood alone. The *vimāna* type temple situated at a few paces away is modern and has no connexion with the Kosaleśvara *maṇḍapa* now under discussion. (Plates XX, XXI). Considering the importance of this shrine, not to mention the superb beauty of the sculpture, the neglected state of this temple is deplorable. Without doubt, it deserves to be declared a monument of national importance under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act.

The main fabric consisted originally of Buddhist brick masonry, of very large sized bricks, beautifully polished and finely set in mortar ; the ceiling was supported, it appears, by four internal pillars, declaring it at once as either a Buddhist shrine or a very early shrine of the Hindus. When the Hindus took it over, they made a number of alterations, the most unusual of which is the addition on two sides of open and pillared stone verandahs of the closed type, with a high railing below, the upright bars of which are either primitive pillars or sculptured panels. That those verandahs (or, as one might call them, balconies) are a later addition to the brick fabrication can be clearly seen even in the photograph, Plate XX, where a distinct line can be found separating the whole structure from the temple proper ; not one of the stones is bonded to the main building, the verandah just stands attached to it from outside.

As would be expected in a basically Buddhist structure, the walls are neither of stone, nor are they provided with continuous bands of sculpture ; isolated niches, exactly as on Buddhist shrines, are provided to hold individual images.

On the other hand, the verandahs, made of stone (the bricks now seen in the photograph are temporarily stacked there as support for the falling roof) are lavishly carved with images ; every one of the pillars supporting the roof of the verandah has a figure, and these are among the most beautiful works of the sculptor's art. They are carved with a tenderness and delicacy entirely absent from early Hindu work in Orissa. *The lovely lady,* illustrated in Plate XXII, adjusting the jewel on her forehead while looking into the mirror, is a superb example of early post-classical art. Standing at ease, but not in the thrice bent (*tribhaṅga*) pose of later mannerism and the baroque, her beautifully proportioned body carved with elegance and a sensuous dwelling on feminine charm, is a masterpiece of the 6th century work, marked by the characteristic moderation in jewellery or in a gentle exaggeration of posture that are signs of early mannerist work. (By the 7th century, personal ornament increases and there is a notable tendency to twist the body into sinuous attitudes). In the treatment of the eye-slit too we have here the classical simplicity,

and none of the elongation that marks the affected works of later centuries.

This date is further reinforced by a study of other sculpture in this remarkable little shrine. *The Kārttikeya image* shown in Plate XXIII is unusual in several respects. Instead of being placed where all other Kārttikeya images are situated in Orissan temples, on the front of the *vimāna*, outside, this image is placed inside the temple, on the right door-jamb of the entrance. I shall leave without comment the strange treatment of the bird, and wish to draw attention to the "wig" style head-dress. As I have pointed out in my book, *A History of Indian Dress*, p. 48, this fashion is typical of the 6th century. I know of no example of "wig" style hair-dress before 550 A.D., and probably none after 650 A.D., but during these hundred years it is the dominant hair style for men. It occurs on the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, but on no later Orissan temple at all. And the Kārttikeya too is wearing no more than a moderate amount of personal ornaments—a single necklace, *e.g.*, where, in the 7th or 8th century there would be two or three ; and he has no more than a single bracelet. The halo, too, is entirely unadorned.

The two other images from the Kosaleśvara here illustrated are equally beautiful, deeply felt, moving works of a great master-sculptor. (Plates XXIV and XXV). Both the *Mother and Child* and the *Loving Couple* are placed inside the little shrine, obviously afterthoughts in a building not meant to hold such images at all.

In the case of the Lovers I would like to draw attention not only to the beauty of the shape of the standing lovers, but the gentleness and tenderness with which the man holds in her hand the lovely foot of the girl—a most unusual composition to which I know no parallel. Indeed, it would be false to call this an erotic image this is not eroticism, this is loving tenderness, love in its full sense.

Of the many promising sites, likely to yield early Buddhist remains, two deserve mention here.

One is Kesaribeda, about 55 km from Papparahandi, which is some 60 km from Koraput. I attempted to visit this site in 1960, but was driven back by the onset of the monsoon that made the road impassable ; I had to return after reaching Papparahandi. But I have it on the authority of the Raja Saheb of Jeypoor, Mr Das, Additional District Magistrate of Koraput in 1960, and Mr Nityananda Das, Superintendent of Tribal Affairs, that the ruins there consist of enormous bricks, "almost two feet long". The conjecture that this has something to do with Buddhists is reinforced by the associations of the locality name.

It has long been known that Orissa (Utkala and Kalinga) boasted of three celebrated relic stūpas, containing remains of the Buddha. One

was the famous Tooth Relic, associated with Dantapura ; furthermore we have it in the *Lalitavistara* that two merchants from Ukkala (the Pali form of Utkala), named Tapussa or Tapassu and Bhalluka or Bhallika became the first lady disciples of the Enlightened One. The Buddha presented them with some of his hair, which they enshrined in a stūpa in Orissa, named Kesa-stupa ; whilst the third contained the finger-nails of the Master, and was named Nakha-stupa.

Now this Kesa-stupa has never been identified, not even tentatively, as far as I know, with any locality ; and I now venture to suggest that it would be worth consideration to connect Kesaribeda with Kesa-stupa. The form *Kesari* may be a later, popular association with the Kesari dynasty, famous for erecting many temples in Orissa (9th-10th centuries A.D.). Only proper excavation could prove whether this hypothesis is right or wrong.

The other most promising site is at Achitrajpur, about 1½ km from Banpur Town, in the District of Puri. Here, on a mound of ruins, obviously of a circular stūpa, stands a modern temple, into which several ancient Buddhist images have been fixed, including the Buddha shown in Plate XXVI. The date of this panel is not easily ascertained, because most of the faces are much worn by the ravages of time. The umbrella suggests a post-Gupta date, and so does the tightly fitting garment of the Buddha. Other indications of a slightly post-Gupta date are the simplicity of the panel, lack of overcrowding, the small halo-like circle under the hand in the *varada-mudrā* (gesture of gift), the excellent proportions of head and body, and the lack of any exaggeration in the posture both of the Master and the two attendants. The presence of two attendants and two garland-bearing *vidyādharas,* represented as floating in small circles, all indicate a date not long after the Gupta period (320—500 A.D.), and the date I consider likely for this sculpture would be between 550 and 650 A.D.

Now the entire mound and area around is scattered with Buddhist remains, and they include a number of complete, or almost complete stone votive stūpas. One is being used to make a small footbridge over a water channel. That this mound is very much worth excavating, cannot be doubted. That the remains would range over a much longer period, is suggested by the Tārā image, picked up here, and carried to the compound of the Godavari Vidyapith, situated a few yards from the stūpa mound and from the modern temple of Achitrajpur. This handsome image, in perfect condition, is made of a very hard, black stone, whereas the Buddha just discussed is of a soft sandstone. The Tārā (Plate XXVII) suggests a much later date, with her elongated eyes, high-arched eyebrows, profuse jewellery, ornate lotus, rich pedestal and the sensuous carving of the breasts and the body. The whites of the eyes bulge out

in a manner not used before the 9th century, and fully developed in the 10th in some parts of India ; a date beyond the 10th century seems unlikely, especially as the back slab is less ornate than 11th century work (say Pāla sculpture) would have favoured.

Achitrajpur, hence, promises finds ranging at least from the 6th century to the 10th.

6

The Great Vihāra of Ratnagiri

THE author of this monograph, hampered as he is by lack of previous work on many subjects, is very much at a disadvantage in the case of the Mahāvihāra of Ratnagiri. The excavations here conducted by the Archaeological Department of India, Eastern Circle, are the most intensive and extensive ever carried out in the whole State of Orissa ; the work is outstandingly well done and the results are astonishing but the Department has not published them anywhere in proper form so far, and the minor objects have all been removed from the site (presumably to Calcutta). This is most regrettable, as Ratnagiri will, undoubtedly, rank with Nālandā and Taxila as among the largest Buddhist establishments anywhere in India, though not, perhaps, comparable to Nāgārjuṇakoṇḍa or Sanchi as yet.

It is pertinent to complain about this lack of publicity, as, in the comparable case of Nalanda, every year's excavation was fully reported in next year's *Annual Report*. When, in one instance, there was a lag of four years, the writer of these lines was employed as editor to expedite the publication of four years' excavations in the *Annual Reports* consolidated for those years. Some account at least of the admirable work done at Ratnagiri ought to have been given to the public by the excavators.

Lacking any information from the Department's officers, I have to depend on my own observations carried out during four visits to the site; two before proper excavations began, one after the first year's work in the summer of 1960 and the last one at the end of the excavation season of 1960-61.

Ratnagiri is one of the three hills in the Asia (or Assia) Range, rich in Buddhist surface finds, rising above the small river Kelua, a branch of the Virupa river. (The local pronunciation is Birūpā). Because of the existence of this triune Buddhist establishment on these hills of Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitagiri (or Altigiri), it has been often conjectured that Ratnagiri would be the *Pushpagiri* visited by Hiuen-Tsiang. Attractive as this conjecture seemed, it is now disproved. An epigraph excavated at Ratnagiri clearly refers to the *Ratnagiri mahāvihāra,* so that we are sure that this name has been in continuous use since Gupta times. Pushpagiri may well be, as has been suggested now, near the ancient ruined city of Sītā Bhinjī (Kheonjhar District).

Ratnagiri is difficult of access. It lies about 39 miles, almost 60 km, from Cuttack town, and a good part of this is on a poor road running along a canal.* It is so narrow that once we simply had to turn back when a lorry, coming from the opposite direction, broke down and could not be moved. It is highly desirable that a site of such importance, such size and such exquisite beauty should be made accessible to the public. Apart from the splendid sculpture, the locale chosen by the Buddhists, as usual with them, is lovely. As is known, Buddhist monasteries are almost invariably located on pleasant hills, far from the madding crowd, and yet near enough to allow the monks to go for their daily round of begging alms in the town nearby. Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitagiri are all most attractive little hills, and must have been even more handsome when there were more trees around—of which there are still some left. One of the trees in Ratnagiri must be several hundred years old. Wedged between its roots and its mighty branches are ancient votive stūpas and fragments of buildings, slowly raised by the growing tree and firmly gripped by gnarled roots and powerful branches. Scattered all round these three hills are numerous images of the Buddhist pantheon, some worshipped by local peasants, others placed respectfully under trees, again others half emerging from the soil.

The excavations revealed so far the following structures (1) An almost exactly square stūpa, surrounded by more than a hundred votive stūpas; (2) the Mahāvihāra, a vast compound of at least two storeys,

* Since writing the above I have been informed that a first-class road was being constructed there.

built round a paved monastic quadrangle ; (3) at least two other monasteries, closely adjoining the Mahāvihāra, on the left (when facing the Mahāvihāra), and (4) the foundations of a small temple on the right, with other ruined walls, suggesting further additional structures, perhaps of less importance, or destroyed on the edge of the hill slope.

All these are new finds—in addition to the large number of images that were already on top of the mound for at least a hundred years.

The stūpa[1] in its present form looks stunted, for the domical structure on the top, which was entirely circular, is gone. (Plate XXVIIa). It is, nevertheless, impressive in size, and is made of superbly levigated clay bricks, rubbed fine, and set in very thin mortar. This finish is so beautiful, and the alignment so accurate that one has the feeling that the master mason examined and passed every single brick after careful scrutiny. I doubt if any Indian brickmaker today can make bricks of this smoothness and finish.

The shape of the stūpa is an almost exact square, each side facing one of the cardinal points ; there are five recesses and six protrusions in the face, but, in view of the size of the walls (47 feet each) (about 14 m 50 cm) this does not look too rich or too fussy. It is, of course, impossible to say what ornament, what painted decoration embellished the lime plaster covering that seems to have been added, presumably at a later period, when the sheer beauty of bare brickwork did not appeal to the monks any more.

Whilst the stūpa was square, a retaining wall has been constructed around it in a circular form. This might have served as a circumambulatory path (*pradakshiṇa-patha*), but there is little proof for that, except the oddity that there is no provision either for a *pradakshiṇa-patha* around the stūpa or on the shoulder of it, for in the latter case there would be some steps leading to it. But the area around the main structure is almost entirely filled up with numberless votive and funerary stūpas, and I should think that they must have numbered over a hundred. These are made either of brick or of stone ; many smaller ones are monolithic, others are of stone masonry, always with a splendid finish. Many have small ornaments on them, such as garlands or miniature images in minute niches, Buddhas, Tārās and deities of the late Buddhist pantheon; they even include, as one might expect at a famous stronghold of the Vajrayāna school of Buddhist sectarian thought,[2] deities recognized by this sect. Some of them are inscribed with the "Buddhist Creed", in a type of characters

1. *Indian Archaeology, 1957-58.*

2. For a definition of Vajrayāna cp. Sahu, *BiO*, pp. 131ff. A belief in everything being "void" seems to have been combined with esoteric Tāntric practices.

ascribable to the 8th and 9th centuries A.D. A few typical votive stūpas are illustrated in Plate XXVIII.

That, on the whole, may well be the main period of the stūpa and the votive stūpas, but there are good reasons to posit a much earlier date for the first stūpa construction. As every evidence, here as well as in the Main Monastery, points to an occupation from the 6th century A.D. at least, it is pertinent to expect that no Buddhist establishment could have existed around here, no monastery and no monks, unless a stūpa stood on the crest of the hill, to which some miraculous virtue was ascribed, some famous connexion with the Master or the Community. In fact, a stone slab has been unearthed with an epigraph of the *Pratitya-samutpāda-sūtra* a text frequently laid down inside stūpas, and presumably intended in this case for a similar location. Now this text is reported to be in characters of the Gupta period; but if we consider the Gupta period strictly as ending in 499 A.D., as it ought to be, this inscription must be ascribed to the 6th century A.D.—the precise date from which the earliest sculpture in the Main Monastery dates. There is no evidence, so far to my knowledge, of an occupation earlier than the sixth century A.D., which, in my nomenclature, must be termed, strictly in accordance with facts, as "early post-Gupta". An extension of the term "Gupta" into the 6th century is historically unwarranted and art historically impossible. The 6th century brings a bold change in style, and cannot be considered any more as "classic". It is the beginning of mannerism.

Structurally the stūpa belongs to the well-known ancient type that is built up, from the foundations, in the shape of a wheel with brick walls for spokes. Upon this foundation rises the solid dome. No relic casked has been found in the main stūpa.

The Mahāvihāra is a mighty and impressive monument, of enormous dimensions—much larger than the monasteries at Nalanda, Bihar. It consists of a huge quadrangle, a portion of which can be seen in Plate XXIX. The entire yard is paved with flagstones. A verandah runs round the whole yard, supported by khondalite stone pillars; behind these are about 24 cells for the monks; in the centre is the shrine of the colossal Buddha, to be described below.

A surprisingly broad staircase of stone steps leads up to the upper storey, of which little now remains; but there can be no doubt that it contained more cells than the lower storey.

This enormous compound has been designed and executed with great skill and devoted attention to detail. The brickwork is throughout of excellent quality, the mortar joints of the finest. Where stone revetments are used, as near the entrance to the monastery or at the entrance to the shrine of the colossal Buddha, the stone is chiselled with the perfection

and finish of ivory carving—a finish sadly missed in later sculptures, of which there are plenty.

Something of the finish of the bricks can be seen in a number of photographs here published, especially in the picture of the Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi (Plate XXXIII).

The entrance is of superb quality, and no single photograph can do it full justice (Plate XXX). Although the stone coat is much later than the brick walls—it may be contemporary with the earlier Bhubaneshwar temples, perhaps the Mukteśvara—the carving is elegant, exquisitely carried out, of great ornamental beauty, without being over rich. Indeed, it will be observed that apart from the doorframe, which is sculptured throughout, the images are still housed in separate niches, and there is no attempt at covering the whole wall with ribbons of statuary—as would be in Hindu temples of the 8th or 9th century. The main decorative elements of the doorframe are also only two ribbons an inner ribbon based on petals of the lotus (with a Gaja-Lakshmī pending in the centre above the door opening), and the famous Orissan motif of the *gelbāi* a creeper intertwined with human beings. This elegant and simple framework is beautifully organized and does not proliferate; and below both jambs are two sculptural panels of moderate size showing a procession of four persons on each side, one distinguished by an umbrella being held over his head. Is it possible that this is a pretended effigy of the king who had donated the monastery? The hairdresses of these eight figures belong clearly to the 8th century; both the moderate sinuousness of their bodies (no *tribhaṅga* postures) and the restrained use of jewellery support this date.

The pilasters that act as a surround, framing the niches on both sides, are based on the same tradition as those on the Paraśurāmeśvara at Bhubaneshwar, but show a further stylization and summariness. The *pūrṇa-kalaśa* or vase of overflowing plenty, is less explicit and more schematic; there can be little doubt that this is later than the 7th century, and that the high pedestal on the sides suggests a date again approximating that of the Mukteśvara rather than the Paraśurāmeśvara (*i.e.* 900 rather than 630 A.D.).

Of the sculptures in the niches I would like to illustrate here one, that of the river goddess Yamunā (Plate XXXI). The Gaṅgā image that must have been on the right side, is missing.

This at first sight most attractive panel shows the goddess in a *tribhaṅga* (thrice broken) pose, with the weight of the body heavily on one hip. Both the attendants are rather awkwardly placed, however, the girl with the umbrella unhappily squeezed under the goddess' arm, and holding the umbrella shaft almost as if she poked a stick into the goddess; the other and smaller figure is even more unhappily twisted, stretching the

right arm in a clumsy way. The bosoms of the women are carved with obvious relish in their large, globular forms, but the heads are far from beautiful, the eyes bulge out, and the head of the goddess is far too large for the height of her body. Yet the composition, with a handsomely depicted turtle in front of waves, has much charm, and is excellently framed by the two pilasters, each with a vase of plenty both at the base and at the capital.

This, obviously, is no sculpture from the best period, though there is much skill and some sensuous charm in it. Judging from the shallow quality of the pilasters and their decorative devices, a date about 900 A.D. would be well justified ; the bulging whites of the eyes make it impossible to place these figures any earlier ; indeed, they suggest a slightly later date. The profuse personal ornamentation (*e.g.* double jewel belt) supports this later date.

This fits in with the obvious fact that the brick wall was erected much earlier, and that the stone revetment has been added later. This also fits in with the well-known fact that earlier Buddhist art does not represent the two river goddesses at the entrance.

The main cult image in this monastery is the *colossal Buddha,* illustrated in Plate XXXII. It is a huge and unbeautiful thing, commended by nothing but size. Lifeless and of bad proportions, its arms and legs are like stiff rods, the head-dress of curls is a mere schematic repetition of old, half-understood formulae, and is shapeless ; the chest is flat and in no way proportionate to the vast head ; the hands—usually good even in late period, third-rate work—are neither of flesh nor bone. Though the face is damaged, it can be seen that the eyes were the best, though somewhat bulging, and that the lips represent pure formalism, with no life and no character, in fact, rather pouting surely not a very proper expression for a Buddha calling the Earth to witness (*bhūmi-sparsha-mudrā*). The lack of ornament on the halo is difficult to explain, unless it is considered unfinished. And it is noteworthy that the Buddha image as well as the two attendants Bodhisattvas on the two sides seem to have been placed into this shrine without any connexion with the brick wall behind them they are just put there, standing against the bare wall, with no evidence of a niche or any framework formed by the brick masonry. Considering how ornate this period was, it is most unlikely that the main cult image would stand before a bare brick wall.

There can be little doubt that *the two Bodhisattvas* (Padmapāṇi and Vajrapāṇi) are by the self-same hand as the colossal seated Buddha. If their quality is somewhat better, it is, most likely, because the colossal image was a task beyond the ability of this sculptor, but in the smaller images he was able to copy existing works. *The Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi,* illustrated

in Plate XXXIII, is such an epigonic work. The legs are again lifeless and fleshless rolls, the arms have no life either. The body is slightly better moulded, and the face, evidently very similar to what the colossal Buddha must have looked like, has well carved eyes but pouting lips. The flowers are carved with clumsy hands, the lotus stalk is an ugly rope, and the flywhisk in the figure's right hand is ludicrously fat and unwieldy more like a menacing club than a light *chaurī*. The feet are like the effort of a child at sculpture.

There is at least one more image that must be recognized readily as the work of this same sculptor, the Master of the Padmapāṇi : the four-armed Bodhisattva with the Dhyāni Buddha in the elaborate head-dress, illustrated in Plate XXXIV. This is inserted in a niche formed by the stone revetment on the outside front of the Great Monastery, and part of the brickwork can clearly be seen in this photograph. This too is a lifeless and soulless image, with bulging eyes, the same arched eyebrows, the same pouting lips, the same flat chest and the same fleshless and muscleless arms. The feet alone, purely formalistically treated, declare at once the same hand that carved the colossal Buddha and the Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi. The lotus flower is again so formalistically handled that it possesses no beauty, and the monstrously elaborate crown with its complicated coiffure gives an effeminate look to a topheavy figure. The two little figures in the corner are of more interest and originality. The skeleton-like, emaciated beggar on the left has an individual character and an almost demoniac face ; but even more demoniac is the strutting, four-armed monster on the right, shown in a vigorous movement, the effect of which is reduced by the cushion foolishly put under his right foot.

Thus, we have here three panels undoubtedly from the period of decline, late Mahāyāna carvings, characterized by a lifeless repetition of once well understood formulae. Even if, for the sake of a hypothesis, we suppose that these were made by a "provincial" artist—a most unlikely supposition—there is the simple fact that the Great Monastery of Ratnagiri contains, among its dozens of images, masterpieces that were obviously made in and for the monastery, by local artists, working in local stone. It would be difficult to date any of the works of the Master of the Padmapāṇi earlier than the 9th century ; a much more likely date would be a century later. The fact, however, that even the decorative elements, such as the leaves of the lotus on the base, are poor and undistinguished work, the ugly massiveness of the lotus flower and the clumsy *chaurī* suggest that these works must be dated to the 11th century A.D. A comparison with the superb ornamental quality of the lotus border and the lovely creeper on the framework of the entrance door, reliably datable to the 8th century A.D., shows a considerable degree of deterioration both in craftsmanship and good taste.

All the colossal Buddhas at Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and Lalitagiri belong to a very late period a period when *large size* took the place of inherent beauty, the beauty of the sculptor's art. One should always distrust *size*; when the artist wants to impress the worshipper with size, he has little other means to induce admiration or adoration. Yet the greatest Buddha images were all of moderate dimensions, or of human size.

To this category belongs the greatest work of art so far excavated at Ratnagiri, and, undoubtedly, one of the most beautiful Buddha images ever discovered in India. This superb masterpiece may well be considered the finest culmination of Buddhist imagery a work of art in which the internal beauty of a great Teacher is expressed to perfection, and in a most harmonious and deeply felt manner. (Plate XXXV).

Now we hear such a great deal about the "spiritual" quality of Indian art that many people are misled into believing that all that matters is the subject-matter, the theme of a sculpture. A greater fallacy is hard to imagine. I have devoted many pages to this error in several books and articles,* and here it is only possible to point out briefly that there exist tens of thousands of Buddha-images, not many even remotely approximating in aesthetic quality the sensitivity and beauty of this superb image; and that, in any case, no two of them are ever entirely identical. It is precisely *the Form* in which an idea is expressed that gives any subject an artistic quality, an aesthetic value. It may be a most earthly theme, such as a beautiful woman, or a pair of lovers in embrace, it may be an image of a monstrous devil or a seductive nymph, the subject-matter, the *matière litéraire,* as the French call it, decides nothing; spiritual or not, sensuous or abstract, the worth of art lies in the Form, in the expressive form in which the artist has succeeded in casting it. This Buddha image is great not because it represents the Buddha—thousands of Buddha images are downright ugly—but because the artist's conception of his way, his manner to express his creative urge was splendid. This Buddha is a unique work of art, as all great works of art are unique; and there is no other Buddha image like it in the world. They may be equally beautiful, but they are different.

There is a superb peace, serenity and contentment that dominate the entire figure. The Buddha is rather more youthful than is usually the case; and though he is shown in contemplation under the Bodhi Tree (indicated by just two, decoratively treated branches above a rather simple halo), there plays round his lips a smile, the smile of contentment, not that of a pessimist (as so many people so wrongly assume of

* See among others my article, "A New Approach to Indian Art History", *DESIGN Annual.*

Buddhism) but a man of detachment, One Who Has Reached It, *Tathāgata.*

Stylistically the image is undoubtedly just past the classical age, (*i.e.* 320 to 495 A.D.,) for there are present everywhere those signs that mark mannerism, immediately following the classic style the love for highly organized though moderate decorativeness, the elegant and patently mannerist treatment in very low relievo of a throne with geese (*hansa*) holding rows of pearls in their beaks and ending in lovely volutes and scrolls instead of a tail; the addition of two flying *vidyādharas,* modestly introduced in small medallions in the two top corners, carrying flowery garlands. Characteristically mannerist is the halo not yet the rich profusion of the later baroque, yet a modest introduction of ornament. A date of about 525 or 530 A.D. would fit this masterpiece very well.

Some of the most enchanting sculptural decoration in the whole Mahāvihāra is found on the doorposts leading to the shrine of the colossal Buddha. Alas, this is no more complete, some upper portions missing; but a comparison with the main gateway to the Great Monastery (Plate XXX) suggests that this work was made by the same hand and bore great resemblance to the carving on the entrance. A look at Plates XXXVI and XXXVII is enough to show that the main plan is similar and the figures bear such resemblance that one is justified to suppose that this doorway is by the same artist as the entrance doorway. The lotus-leave border is missing, and the procession of the king (?) is replaced here by four attendants on the Buddha; but the little lady in the niche, the bordering pilaster, the creeper-with-figures (*gelbāi*) and the floral creeper on the inside edge are all extremely similar to those employed on the entrance frame of the monastery.

On the left doorjamb the figures are from right to left a doorkeeper (*dvārapāla*), a Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi, a female *chaurī-bearer,* and a Serpent King with a jar in his hand (the jar is clearly seen in the opposite jamb, here it is destroyed). Each of these figures lives as it were in a small compartment, in dignified solitude, and the first thing that strikes the observer is the lack of exaggeration in postures the only exception is the guardian of the door, treated in a clumsy way on both jambs, leaning awkwardly on a club, or, rather *lathi* (rod). In fact, the four figures on the right-hand doorjamb seem to me to be less skilfully handled than on the left; and the figures here reproduced will show that we have here an able artist of the late period, for whom the past is not simply ready formulae, to be repeated, but who tries to infuse grace and charm into his little figures. Particularly charming is the tiny *chaurī*-bearer girl in the niche above the head of the Bodhisattva, and careful observers will once again see some similarity between the ornamentation of the

Baitāl Deul of Bhubaneshwar and the decorative treatment of this doorpost.

But before coming to a more accurate dating of the carved doorframe at the entrance to the colossal Buddha shrine, we have to consider for a moment the other ornamental elements. As far as the *gelbaī* ribbon is concerned, it seems to me that this attractive but surely strange motif has never been quite understood. John Beams, writing on a similar Buddhist doorframe now in the Patna Museum, spoke of "grotesque creatures" climbing up a continuous, weavy creeper ; from the "excessively *nitaṁbinī* outlines, they are probably intended for females", he adds.[3] But in our case there can be no doubt that these creatures are male, nor do I think are they very grotesque. Had they been women, one could think of them as some kind of *yakshīs,* or *vṛikshakās,* wood nymphs or some *dei* (very) *minores,* little godlings of the forest ; the more so as the Indian forest is thick with superhuman beings, from monstrous *rākshasas* (demons) to benevolent and seductive nymphs, protectresses of gentle animal life and of the weary traveller.

Whilst these explanations must, no doubt, hold good, at least as the general emotional background of these charming fancies, I believe that we have to trace these creatures back to the undulating creepers that decorate the coping stone of Bharhut, and are also found in early Buddhist stūpas, say, in Andhra. There the direction was horizontal, and so it remained in those garlands carried by small *putti* in the art of Gandhāra. The essence of the motif is the same an undulating creeper or flower garland is held there, supported, by little boys or dwarfs ; here the creeper climbs upwards, and the undulating stem holds the same type of dwarfs or boys, rather climbing than supporting. That this motif, in its ultimate origin, has something to do with the garland-bearing *putti* of Greco-Buddhist art, is a conclusion difficult to escape ; but it has been changed considerably in order to express a typically Indian feeling about Life in Vegetation and the animation of all floral life.*

This particular *gelbāi* must be recognized as highly ornate and involved. Both on the main entrance door and on this doorframe at the entrance of the Buddha shrine the artist revels in superbly elegant scrollwork, in true baroque fashion ; and the same can be said of the other scroll that stands

3. John Beams, "The Alti Hills in Cuttack", *JASB,* 1875, pp. 19ff.

* It is with considerable astonishment that I have to mention here my discovery of a *gelbāi* on the cathedral of Messina, Italy. The similarity of the scroll and the little men with Orissan examples is almost unbelievable. The motif on the Messina cathedral and on the Orissan temples is totally identical. I have no explanation to offer. But I have to mention that the Messina cathedral is slightly later in date than the majority of examples in Orissa.

to the right of it, a floral device of exquisite fancy and rich elaboration. Now this type of scrollwork, this baroque riches, may be expected on a temple such as the Rājarāni (about 1000 A.D.), whereas the *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (Vase of Plenty) could not possibly be as late as that. Neither do the postures of the figures, simple and only gently bent, suggest a late date of fully unfolded baroque they are far too straight, notably the Bodhisattva and the *Nāgarāja* ; and as to the young woman with the flywhisk, her body would have been carved in sinuous curves and a thrice-bent pose in the 9th century. Even the simple bead border round the compartments suggests an earlier date than the scrollwork would, so that all considerations lead to a date of about 800 A.D. or only slightly later. This is also the date indicated by the ornaments and the head-dresses.[4]

In the middle of the 9th century, let this be noted, Buddhist sculptors produced work of great charm and elegance.

A few more examples of statuary are necessary to realize fully the changes in style and quality through the many centuries (about seven or eight centuries) of artistic activity at Ratnagiri. And it may be mentioned, *en passant,* that true eroticism, copulating figures, is either completely absent, or, if there is any, I did not discover it. Gentle flirtation, hints at love-making do occur, as in the attractive late panel shown in Plate XXXVIII, evidently contemporaneous with the Mukteśvara (perhaps 850 to 900 A.D.), where the shy and embarrassed young lady is coaxed by the lover. And this absence of erotic sculpture is the more unexpected as late Buddhism was renowned for its laxness of morals. All the Hindu collections of tales and stories refer frequently to Buddhist nuns as procuresses and go-betweens, ready to bring sweethearts and amorous couples together for a small consideration ; in fact, the impression is created in the minds of the readers of the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* and other such books that in the 12th century A.D. or so Buddhist nuns did nothing else but whoremongering—a shocking departure from the teachings of the Master. Actual finds at Nagarjunakonda suggest that one room near the monks' cells was reserved in late days for such practices, for its floor was found rich in broken pieces of feminine jewellery—an odd type of trouvaille for a monastic order bound to celibacy.

At least one image is that of an Orissi ballet dancer. This is a handsome piece of carving, evidently of the 8th-9th century (Plate XXXIX) in which the *nartakī* is seen in a typical Orissi *adavu* (posture or stance of legs bent at the knees), the upper body sinuously curving to one side,

4. Cp. *A History of Indian Dress,* Plate XII, for identical head-dress, waist-belt and the "divided necklace" of the chaurī-bearer girl (Plate XII, inset *d*). The date there given is 850—900 A.D., which is the probable date for these sculptures.

the right hand in the well-known *hasta-lakshaṇa* (hand gesture) called in the textbooks *paṭāka-hasta* (four fingers straight up, together, and the thumb curving under the palm) known to every Orissi dancer of today. The other arm, longer than it should be, holds what looks like a flower; flying scarves show that she is in vigorous dance movement. An interesting detail to hold here hair in position while dancing, it seems, there is what looks like a ribbon tied across her forehead an appurtenance I have never encountered on any sculpture so far.

Dancing, thus, has penetrated the sacred precincts of the Great Monastery, by about 850 A.D. or so.

It is most instructive to have a good look at two more Buddha images in order to realize the change of style over a period of several hundred years. The Buddha in the earth-touching attitude (*bhūmi-sparsha-mudrā*) in Plate XL shows many memories of a better period. The face has little expression, though one can discern an attempt at a benevolent smile; the body has some shape, though no life, and legs and arms are not of flesh and bone. But the two attendant figures, the Bodhisattva Lotus-in-hand and the Bodhisattva Thunderbolt-in-hand retain much grace and their bodies are elegantly flexed; nor are the attributes in their hands as unwieldly and unbeautiful as with the attendants on the colossal Buddha (Cp. Plate XXXIII). The lotus in the hand of the Padmapāṇi (left of the Buddha) in this image is a handsome, gracefully curving flower, and the flywhisk is not the menacing monstrosity seen in the other Padmapāṇi. The headdress is excellently done, the proportions are carefully worked out, and there is undoubted charm in both these somewhat romantically bent figures. The lotus seat is finely carved, and the highly elaborate stem below shows great sense for ornamental exuberance, though the lions can hardly be praised. Evidently a piece of work from the end of the 8th century.

But the deterioration over the coming period is painfully in evidence in Plate XLI where another Buddha in the earth-touching attitude testifies to a marked decline in skill and sensitivity. This Buddha, with its huge eyebrows and thick eyelids, its bulging white of eye, its squat body and lifeless limbs sits on a lotus *āsana* hastily carved; the two attendant figures have neither grace nor elegance, and the portion below the lotus seat is an accumulation, without symmetry or beauty, of a number of elements that includes an ugly worshipper with an ill-formed nose. It is obvious that old formulae have become dead by this time and that the sculptor worked without inspiration, an imitator of moderate skill. This belongs to the period of decline, and can hardly be older than the 11th century; in fact, it could be a 12th century work.

If a good number of the images—including some to follow here—date from a late period, an explanation is not difficult to find. It is simply this

that the monastery was, in its early centuries, a sober and unadorned dwelling place for the brethren, with very few images, among which is the beautiful Buddha of Plate XXXV. The entire stone revetment is of a later date, and so are most of the images, including the colossal Buddha as the centuries passed, image worship increased, the Buddhist Mahāyāna pantheon grew, until it swelled to a fantastic theolatry totally alien to primitive Buddhism. The Enlightened One, had he come to visit the Ratnagiri Mahāvihāra, would not have recognized it as belonging to the gospel that he had taught. Even the Mahāyāna school of the earlier centuries, say, 2nd to 6th centuries A.D., knew nothing of the hundreds of new gods and goddesses invented in the 7th and 8th. And it is a rather sad coincidence that the vast growth of the Mahāyāna pantheon came at a time when artistic standards started to decline.

The god Jhambala, shown in Plate XLII is such a creation of late centuries, a god the very name of which was unknown to the early Buddhists. Like Kubera, another god born of wishful thinking, Jhambala is the bringer of earthly wealth—and thus belongs to a world of prayer, the very opposite of the aims of primitive Buddhism. In his right he holds a citron, and in his left a mongoose out of whose mouth pearls are dropping. Below him are the eight jars containing the precious substances (*ashṭaniddhis*) (1) mahāpadma, (2) padma, (3) saṅkha, (4) makara, (5) kacchapa, (6) kuṇḍa, (7) mukuṇḍa, and (8) nīla—whatever they mean, they are bringers of riches, physical wealth. The god himself is covered with rich jewellery, from head to foot. It is an unendearing countenance that looks at us, and the monstrously large hands and the ugly leg, as if attacked by elephantiasis, make it difficult to us, latter-day onlookers, to appreciate the appearance of this image.

Slightly better, though still dominated by formalism, is the goddess shown in Plate XLIII. The softness of the feminine flesh is better rendered, the face is less stern, though unlovely, the jewellery less rich, and helps to bring out the softness of the full breasts. Even legs and arms have some shape, though the wrist holding a sheaf of corn (?) is far too fat. On the other hand, the hair-dress is elegantly done, and the two little garland bearers, floating on top, are light and airy.

But there is far more tenderness and beauty in the isolated little image of the goddess in Plate XLIV. The eyes are most original, full of individual character, and possess even the sophistication of not being quite equal a typical observation of the highest form of baroque individualism. Only in this highly sensitive period does the artist in India observe that two eyes are never perfectly identical, and that a slight variation brings life and character into the face. The narrow chin, almost "French" in shape, is another unusual element, giving the face not the customary,

rounded oval form, and allowing the sculptor to raise a little the cheekbone. This, indeed, is a *tour de force,* and the result is enchanting.

There is a sensuous dwelling on the rounded breasts, coquettishly half-covered with an entirely transparent, thin veil, against the softness of which stands the hard carved *yajñopavita,* the sacred thread, so winding that it gives a calculated emphasis to the rounded shape of the bosom. In my book, *A History of Indian Dress,* I gave ample proof,[5] of the fact that women wore the sacred thread in ancient times, and illustrated one example (Plate XI, about 740 A.D.) in which the woman wears the *yajñopavita* and the man does not. Buddhists also wore the sacred thread, witness numerous examples at Nagarjunakonda.

But equally well done is the rest of the slightly sinuous body. The arms and legs lack the charm that the trunk with the soft flesh round the navel displays, but the hand in the gift-attitude, with its slender, elegantly elongated fingers, is lovely. Jewellery is most moderate only one necklace, two armlets, one bracelet, no rings, no anklet; on the other hand, the hair is highly ornate and richly bejewelled.

This, then, is the work of an artist of considerable originality, and cannot belong to the period of late baroque. From all indications, including the shape of the eyeslit, one can conclude that this is late mannerist, early baroque work, and a date of about 700 A.D. would fit it well.

Two cult images in the two smaller monasteries adjoining the Mahāvihāra of Ratnagiri belong to late periods, but they are vastly different. What, lacking any further information from the excavators, I call Monastery No. 2 (to the left of the Great Monastery when facing the entrance), possesses a rather attractive standing Buddha image (Plate XLV) which is just made to lean, in an inclined way, against the low remains of the brick wall. This has been righted in the photograph here published, by tilting the camera. It is obviously not where the image originally stood, but I am unable to find a niche where it could have been housed.

This Buddha is made of a porous and coarse stone, perhaps a form of laterite, and the weathering has left it with many pockmarks. This makes dating difficult, but the eyes give plenty of indication that this is a late, epigonic work, rather strictly formed on older examples, but lacking their beauty and inspiration. The umbrella is ornate, and there is a halo of flames around the head. He is standing with the right hand offering gifts (*varada-mudrā*), and the body is stiff and lifeless. Of the two little strange creatures at his feet one wears a high crown and has a ridiculous grin on his face and ill-cut eyelids. Though modelled on 6th-7th century images with the "wet drapery", this statue must have been made at least

5. Pp. 15, 52, 54, 62. Women today do not wear the sacred thread.

in the 11th century A.D., and could not have formed part of the original Monastery No. 2, a small and obviously much older structure, distinguished by arches or rather vaults over the cells, formed by curving bricks specially moulded for this purpose.

The other cult image is in a small building adjoining and almost facing the entrance to Monastery No. 2. Again, lacking information from the Archaeological Department, I have given this building the name Monastery No. 4. The main image, shown in Plate XLVI is turning its back towards the Great Stūpa, and small votive stūpas can be seen just behind it, on a higher level. Here the ground rises towards the stūpa compound. This richly crowned and bejewelled Bodhisattva is seated in the *dhyāni* posture, his eyelids lowered in contemplation. The face is almost haughty in its detachment, and lacks all benevolence or charity, the pouting lips give it a further unpleasant expression, and the numerous additional figures (four on each side, one on the pedestal) and the monstrous fighting lions on the base are in contrast to the peaceful and meditative pose. Yet there is no doubt about the skill of the sculptor, even if one is inclined to doubt his inspiration. The proportions, especially of the rather rounded face, are fine, and legs and arms show plastic ability. A date of around 850—900 A.D. would probably suit this image best.

Mention has been made of the arches or vaults in Monastery No. 2. They are made of elongated bricks moulded in a correctly curved form, and thus reminiscent of the arches found at Nalanda. As is now known, it is incorrect to believe that the arch (and arcuate construction methods) was introduced into India by the Islamic builders. The arch, in various forms, was known to the Indian architect, though he made little use of it. The corbelled arch was known as far back as Mohenjo-daro, and corbelling both of door openings and of ceilings was a wide-spread architectural practice long before the Islamic invaders entered India. The vaulted cells, however, are not roofed by corbelling but by curved bricks that form a veritable arch; and in Monastery No. 1 (the Mahāvihāra) we encounter a true arch of stone, holding up the second storey near the entrance cell. This is clearly seen in Plate XLVII.

From the architectural point of view the excellent little temple in Plate XLVIII is of great interest. Built to the right of the Great Monastery, next to a small, ruined monastery, that, *manque de mieux*, I have numbered Monastery No. 3, it is basically different from the other structures at Ratnagiri, inasmuch as it is entirely stone masonry. The filling, irregular, is faced by a beautifully finished other coat of stone, and the steps in front clearly show the use of iron rivets. The shape of the *maṇḍapa* is an unashamed, plain square, suggesting an early date, but the little sanctum —a proportionately very small one—has several protruding facets. There

is no sign of pillars, and if this structure was astylar, and had not even a porch, it is in many ways a most unusual structure for a Buddhist temple.

I suggest that the explanation lies in imitation. As Hinduism was strongly flourishing in the neighbourhood by the 8th century, and temples went up, one after another, in an almost feverish activity around Bhubaneshwar, there was an interplay of influences. Hindu architects and sculptors had much to learn from their Buddhist colleagues, and they did, indeed, borrow and copy and learn a good deal. But it is not necessary to look upon this as a "one-way traffic", and it must be considered likely that, in this late period of obvious rivalry between two communities, the Buddhists had to learn from their Vaishnava fellows. In religious tenets, such as Tāntra and image worship, this has been widely recognized. In the case of art, this is less obvious.

Nevertheless, the existence of a stone temple at Ratnagiri suggests Brahmanic influence. Where all structures were made of brick—and what beautiful bricks !—the erection of an all-stone temple is a matter for wonder. The more so, as Buddhists were, in reality, in little need of temples, and did not have them until a late date. Images were usually installed in cells, or housed in niches provided in the brick walls. The creation of a special temple, with a *garbha-gṛiha,* a sanctum to hold the image, is basically a Brahmanic conception. It is known in late Buddhism, and must be accepted as one of the many influences of Brahmanic practice on declining Buddhism.

It is impossible to date this little, elegant shrine, with any accuracy, lacking further artistic evidence ; a tentative date of the 8th or 9th century, until further evidence comes to light, may be accepted for the time being. This would make the shrine later than the Paraśurāmeśvara and earlier than the Rājarāni at Bhubaneshwar.

We must now turn to the remarkable facade excellently reconstructed by the Archaeological Department in the yard of the Great Monastery, from numerous fragments. Most of the uprights, as can be seen in Plate XLIX, are plain pieces of stone, put there in order to hold up the top portions, but the height is authentic, as proved by the right side, where almost the entire facade is preserved. This is an impressive structure, and one wished one knew where it stood originally.

There is a doorway in the centre (with a window above it) and on each side of it three window-like openings, which might have been niches for sculptured panels or images. The entire wall has a strong resemblance to Brahmanic temples. Not only is it made of stone and then carved ***in situ,*** as Hindu temples in Orissa, but, with the exception of one important motif, every other element is well known from the temples of Bhubanesh-

war, from the 7th to the 11th centuries A.D. These include the now stylized *chaitya*-windows, of Buddhist origin, but widely employed in this flat and ornamental form in Hindu temple decoration ; and the repetitive, superimposed roofs, starting above every window as a kind of eaves, and continuing as a decorative device several times above it, with small upstanding ornaments breaking the monotony of the straight upper line. You will find this device anywhere, from the Paraśurāmeśvara to the Brahmeśvara (11th century), with the little rampant lions (topmost range in the picture) more prevalent in earlier centuries.

The one element unknown to Brahmanic temples of the period is illustrated in Plate L. In the window above the entrance in Plate XLIX one can see eight such little huts, diminishing in size as one is put above the other, and outside four of these huts or niches stand little Buddha-figures. They are rather well made Buddhas, each slightly different from the other, and though the eyes—wide open—are not well done, the figures show close acquaintance with mannerist Buddha figures. One is inclined to conjecture that these small niches were meant to hold oil lamps, to show the late traveller the entrance ; but this is no more than a surmise.

One tell-tale element, seen somewhat less clearly in the photograph, is the nāga-pillar so familiar from the temples of Bhubaneshwar and Konarka. This can be found closely adjoining on the left, the rightmost opening of the entire wall ; and on the other side, a small fragment of a similar serpent pilaster can be seen between the niches second and third from the left. As in Brahmanic temples, the coils of the serpent are wound round and round the pilaster, and the Nāga is found, in a prayerful attitude, at the bottom.

It is evident from these elements that we have here a late addition to the brick structure of the monastery, made in imitation of contemporary Hindu temples, entirely of stone, and employing many of the devices found on Brahmanic shrines. I am unable to give a final verdict on the date of this fascinating piece of transitional art, but I suggest a date around 1000 A.D., more or less contemporary with the Rājarāni Temple. The basic difference is the lack of numerous enchanting figures, mostly female, found in profusion on the Rājarāni, among a forest of floral ornament and scrollwork ; and it is worth noting that the Buddhist tradition survives the onslaught of Hindu influence in this one respect. The old Buddhist tradition is that sculpture belongs into niches, and six niches are provided for images which are not now in position. The walls may have ornament, but they are not to be used for an endless ribbon of figurative work.

* * *

It may be, rightly, objected that this chapter on Ratnagiri does not treat the matter chronologically, and that there is a certain amount of jumping from century to century, earlier finds being treated later and *vice versa*. This treatment is partly due to the nature of the monastery, in which old and new, middle and late, are seen cheek by jowl. A detailed publication of excavation results might help in sorting out periods, but this first discussion of the subject must needs suffer from the ills of all pioneer work. Readers turning back these pages will observe that this author could find nothing earlier than the superb Buddha image, one of the most beautiful in all the world, illustrated in Plate XXXV ; though it is highly likely that parts of the stūpa go back to the 5th century A.D. That most of the brickwork of the monasteries dates from the 6th and 7th centuries, is likely ; and it is not impossible that the beautiful Buddha was the first cult image at that period.

The date of the stone revetment, the main entrance and the entrance to the colossal Buddha seem to be all of one period ; but many of the images added are later, and image carving goes on, it seems, into the 12th century A.D. Mrs Debala Mitra mentioned in a broadcast from Cuttack radio station of All India Radio that artistic activity continued into the 13th century. That would make it contemporary with Konarka. Whilst this is not impossible, I find little evidence of this late work, and am under the impression that little was added after the 11th century.

Artistically speaking, 6th to 8th century work at Ratnagiri is patently superior to contemporary Brahmanic art ; after that, militant Hinduism is in the lead, and there is a steady deterioration in quality.

Ratnagiri, from whatever point of view, is one of the most valuable art historical documents ever found in this country. It is a lithic record of at least seven hundred years of art in Orissa.

7

Isolated Buddhist Images of the Late Period

IN his pioneer book, *Buddhism in Orissa,* Dr N. K. Sahu devotes considerable space (Chapter XI, pp. 181 to 224) to "Mahayanic and Tantric Art in Orissa". This chapter includes Ratnagiri, not yet excavated at the time Dr Sahu wrote his book, and some sites the Buddhist character of which is still in doubt ; such is Sita Bhinji. But the large majority of the images discussed is brought together in that book for the first time, and readers are referred to Dr Sahu's work for a remarkable account of the enormous number of Buddhist images scattered all over Orissa and belonging to the later schools of Buddhism.

Dr Sahu rightly remarks "The Buddhists, unlike the Śaivites appear to have given greater attention and emphasis on carving out beautiful statues, and on laying out great monastic institutions, than on constructing gigantic temples of stones" (p. 185). Reference has already been made in the present work (p. 30) to the fact that Buddhist structures were, with extremely few exceptions of the late period, built of brick, with provision for images being located in niches provided in the brick masonry. And it is reasonable to say that many of these brick monasteries have either fallen partly to ruin or the bricks re-used in houses, whilst the stone

images that adorned the niches remained, often worshipped as Hindu deities or left intact in the collapsed rubble. Bricks are not sacred, but images have a sanctity attached to them, to whatever faith or sect they belong. There are numerous examples of this being the case, as, *e.g.* at Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri and Udayagiri, where isolated images were kept in reverence or rehoused in newly built temples, whereas the brick monasteries remained hidden under the ground, and cows were grazing over the ruins for centuries. The example of the Kosaleśvara Temple at Baidyanath again shows how ancient bricks were re-used by the Hindus in their own temple, whilst among the many examples known to us of Buddhist images being revered I mention only those of Achitrajpur (Plate XXVI), Kapilprasad (Plate III) or Ganiapalli (Plate XV).

If the present author mentions here a few examples only of these Buddhist statues found up and down the whole area of present-day Orissa, it is partly because a more detailed discussion does not seem so necessary now that we possess the eloquent testimony provided by the recently excavated remains of Ratnagiri. That there was in Orissa an indigenous and continuous Buddhist art from the 4th century A.D. to about the 12th, is now patently evident.

Nevertheless, a word must be said here about the possible connexion of Orissan Buddhist work and that during the Pāla and Sena dynasties in Bengal.

The great poverty of Bengal in ancient remains is a negative argument, no doubt, and it is not impossible that more Buddhist antiquities may be found than the solitary temple at Paharpur ; on the other hand, no amount of Islamic rule can quite explain away the fact that Bengal has nothing to offer in comparison to the many hundreds of temples found in Orissa, ranging at least from the early 7th century to the 18th. The large number of images, Buddhist and Brahmanic, made during the enlightened period of the Pāla and Sena rulers appear to have been made mainly in the 11th and 12th centuries, with an extension, perhaps, either way. And it is logical to conclude, as in the case of Orissa, that most, if not all, these images were placed, once upon a time, in niches made in brick masonry. The probability of brick structures being discovered in Bengal is, thus, there.

On the other hand, Buddhist artistic activity in Orissa is much, much older than the 11th century ; even from the present fragmentary evidence it is obvious that it has a continuous and uninterrupted history, at least from the 4th century onwards, and that there are numerous sculptures in Orissa belonging to the period 7th to 11th centuries during which Bengal produced nothing so far known, except Paharpur. The neighbouring Bihar has, to be sure, an equally uninterrupted history of artistic activity

all during these centuries ; but any sculpture of that period in Bengal, if it existed, is not yet known.

Thus, a *prima facie* case can be made out for an indigenous, Orissan school of Buddhist art ; and it is also interesting to note that the only known connexion of Orissa with the Pāla dynasty is that in the first quarter of the 12th century the Pālas raided Orissa, during the decline of the Kesari dynasty (together with a number of other raiders who all took their chance against a weakening rule, such as the Kalachuris and the Gaṅgas). Now if the Pālas raided Orissa, it is highly improbable that they could be responsible in any way for the artistic creations of the land they came to sack.

Soon after that the Imperial Gaṅgas conquered the whole of Orissa, and there were no further raids.

Whilst, thus, any suggestion of Pāla influence on Orissan sculpture is plainly ruled out, it would not be improper to suggest a reverse of influence. Every indication points to the fact that Brahmanic supremacy became very strong in Orissa by the 10th century ; the greatest masterpieces of Hindu temple architecture, including that marvel of architecture and sculpture, the Rājarāni, date from the age around 1000 A.D., whilst there is a marked decline by the 11th century in Buddhistic artistic activity.

The conjecture, therefore, is not quite unreasonable that able Orissan sculptors and *śilpins* migrated in the 11th century to the neighbouring Bengal, where they found patrons of Buddhism willing to give them work and bread. Whilst there is no proof for this hypothesis, it would offer, at least, some explanation for the sudden flowering of Pāla sculpture—a phenomenon for which, to my knowledge, no one has offered so far a satisfactory reason.

That craftsmen wandered from one state to the other in a world in which neither nationality nor passports existed, has always been known. Dynasties have much less to do with style than surmised by some scholars, among them Dr Hermann Goetz, whose hypotheses that every dynasty was connected with a style ("Vakataka style", "Kalachuri style", "Chola style" etc.) have been severely criticised recently in Germany. The frontiers were wide open. The rumour that a great building was going to be erected in A country would have rapidly brought craftsmen from B and C countries to the spot ; and *śilpins* who were idle for a time in Bihar would have flocked to Orissa—on the famous Jagannatha Road it would have taken them a few weeks—no doubt.

The fact remains that with all similarity in contemporary style all over India Ratnagiri is *not* Nalanda and Nalanda is *not* Ratnagiri. Mannerism and Baroque arrive everywhere about the same period, no doubt. Techni-

cal similarities can be discovered in such matters as the use of arches both at Nalanda and at Ratnagiri.

Yet the construction of the monastery at Ratnagiri shows a strong local flavour, even to the extraordinary quality of the superb brickwork, quite unmatched in Nalanda. And it is noteworthy that many of the decorative elements employed at Ratnagiri and Lalitagiri were continued in the Brahmanic temples at Bhubaneshwar and elsewhere in Orissa, whereas they remain unknown elsewhere. Such is the *gelbāi* motif, the creeper with little dwarfish creatures climbing all over it, or the flat use of the pilaster rising from a Vase of Plenty, almost identical at Ratnagiri, the Baitāl Deul and the Paraśurāmeśvara.

And if craftsmen from Nalanda did come to Ratnagiri, there is little evidence of it. At a time when Nalanda made ample use of stucco plaster, Ratnagiri turned to sandstone revetment a material almost unknown at Nalanda. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Orissa possessed a largely indigenous, local style all her own ; and it may be posited that this vigorous artistic activity was supported by the overseas trade of the opulent merchants of the country. There is little evidence, almost none so far, of royal patronage. The dynastic history of Orissa is an unglorious list of numerous princes, almost all the time at war with each other and with invading princes of neighbouring areas, many of them with fantastic, high sounding titles claiming to be rulers and "emperors" of much larger areas than they actually possessed. At one and the same time two and three kings claim to be *mahārāja ādhirāja Tri-kaliṅga ādhipati*, emperor, king of kings, lord of the three Kalingas, and often they add that they had conquered the whole world, nothing less.[1]

If they had anything to do with the Buddhist art of these marvellous seven hundred years, it is not known. The conclusion, reached already in Chapter 4, that the wealthy merchants of Orissa, the "Klings" or Kalingans, were the true supporters of Buddhist art, has much to commend it, and would explain the long continuity, uninfluenced by the wars of the many petty dynasties.

* * *

To the numerous Buddhist images found almost everywhere in Orissa belong the two admirable sculptures illustrated in Plates LI and LII. The lovely Lokeśvara statue, alas, headless, in Plate LI is now in the State Museum, Bhubaneshwar. It has no label, but Dr Sahu says that it

1. *E.g.* Yayāti, who is described as *viśvavijaya nṛipati* ("all-conquering Lord"). Cp. Mahtab, *HoO,* I, p. 175.

comes from the Badagada locality of Bhubaneshwar. It is 135 cm high (4′ 5″) and splendidly finished. The gently swaying posture suggests ease combined in a remarkable way with dignity, achieved by the elongation of the limbs giving added height to this impressive statute. The elongation of the legs alone suggests a date of around 1000 A.D., and reminds one of the Khajuraho style, in which elongated legs are a pronounced stylistical feature. On the other hand, by the 11th century one would expect some more sinuousness and more agility of the body than this Lokeśvara displays. It is when one looks at the enchantingly carved little female figures at the bottom and the agitated crowd of worshippers at the base that one realizes that the artist had kept his divine personage purposefully in a dignified and noble posture. The beautiful lady with the enormous lotus flower at the left is grace personified; her slight twist is delicious, and she puts her weight on one foot. The rather prominent nose is characteristic of the 11th and 12th century work, and is widely used at Konarka, but the lack of exaggerated sinuousness and the perfect proportions of the figure suggest an earlier date. The other attendant lady, alas, without a head, shows equal mastery over the curving and flexible beauty of the female body; the hanging arm that holds the waterpot is a masterly piece of work, worthy of a ballerina. Indeed, it is precisely what is called in Western ballet dancing the *porte de bras.*

Noteworthy in the crowd of worshippers at the base is the occurrence of bearded men. As pointed out in my book, *A History of Indian Dress,* pp. 36 and 58, men invariably shaved in olden days, except holy men, and in the 10th century "rather suddenly" men started wearing beards. Every indication points, thus, to a date at the end of the 10th century, a date that suggests comparisons with the Rājarāni of Bhubaneshwar. There is the same sensuousness in the treatment of the feminine beauty, and the same dignity in the divine figure as in the male divinities at the Rājarāni. Even the pendant, jewelled loops that hang from the highly ornate belt are almost entirely identical with the belt of the dancing girl shown in Plate XIV in *A History of Indian Dress,* also of about 1000 A.D. Observe that both female attendants wear the sacrificial thread, and that the earring and the head ornament of the attendant on the left are entirely identical with those worn by the dancing girl in the plate just quoted.

The torso illustrated in Plate LII is again in the State Museum, Bhubaneshwar, and its provenance is unknown. It is suggested by the Museum's authorities that it is a Vishṇu, but the similarity of this beautiful image to the previously discussed Lokeśvara is so great that I am tempted to doubt its ascription. There are no clear indications of its being a Vishṇu, and the similarity of such details as the necklace and the belt clasp is so great that one is justified in accepting it as another Bodhi-

sattva image. If so, it is one of the handsomest among many, and testifies to admirable skill and great sensitivity. The upper body is not twisted, there being only a slight bend, but the main attention of the sculptor is concentrated on the personal ornaments and the patterned shawl (*aṅgavastra*) which has an exquisite border of flower ornament. The increase in ornamentation and especially the richer loops hanging from the belt suggest a very slightly later date than that of the Lokeśvara, perhaps 1050 A.D. or so.

One more image, more or less of the same period, has been found in the Bhubaneshwar area, suggesting a flourishing Buddhist practice in this city of hundreds of Brahmanic temples. This is a matter never fully realized, I believe, and worth noting. This is the Lokeśvara torso illustrated in Plate LIII and found in Jharpada, a northern suburb of Bhubaneshwar. It is made of yellowish-red sandstone and is a colossal image, its height in its present mutilated state being 1 m 78 cm (6½ feet), *i.e.* well over the height of a man. There is great similarity in the moulding of the body and in the personal ornaments ; the necklace, the belt clasp and the position (if not the pattern) of the *aṅgavastra* are strikingly similar, and one hopes that the head, though damaged, helps us to reconstruct mentally the missing heads of the two previous images. It is a face with a broad, gentle smile on it, full of humanity and goodwill ; the eyes are not attenuated and the eyebrows are not exaggerated. The flesh around the navel suggests moderate corpulence, and the suggestion of softness is excellently done. If the loops are missing under the belt, it is highly probable that they have dropped off even a casual examination of the previous two images will show that some parts of the loops can fall off without leaving much of a mark. There might have been a small Amitābha on top of the crown, now missing ; and it is noteworthy that none of these three Lokeśvara images are four-armed—as later specimens often are.

Lokeśvara is one of the most widely loved and worshipped Tāntric images in Buddhism ; and the find of three such images at Bhubaneshwar suggests a strong cult of Tāntric Buddhism about the same time that the Rājarāni was built. Discriminating observers will discern much similarity between the charming lady attendant (perhaps Tārā) on the left of the beautiful Lokeśvara image in Plate LI and the seductive charmers that populate the walls of the Rājarāni.

At Balasore, (or Baleśvar), more than 100 miles away from Bhubaneshwar, there is another smiling image that is likely to be a Lokeśvara again. As will be seen in the illustration (Plate LIV) this is a seated image, and though in many respects remarkably similar to the Bhubaneshwar Museum colossal figure, it has a noticeable bend from the waist. But ornaments such as the crown, the necklace and the belt are so similar that they may

have been made by the self-same hand, or only slightly later. Here, then, is further evidence of wide-spread Buddhist worship and artistic activity at the same time that Brahmanic temple architecture was flowering on the Orissan coast.[1a]

Again, in the opposite direction, some 200 km inland from the seashore and more than 220 km as the crow flies from Bhubaneshwar, lies Bolangir deep inland, indeed, and not even on a river system, for the Mahanadi is quite a distance away. This is worth mentioning, because it has been contended that all culture was either on the seashore or along the great rivers of Orissa if inland ; but this is not quite true, either of Ganiapalli or Narsinghnath, nor of the remarkable finds of Patnagarh—far away from any great river.

Patnagarh is some 37 km from Bolangir town, and must have once contained several Buddhist temples. Excavations here are sure to yield interesting remains, for the two modern temples now standing here are richly decorated with the spoils of several ancient Buddhist shrines. The Shiva-temple called Kosaleśvara is literally a patchwork, in which fragments and pieces of many old Buddhist buildings are incorporated higgledy-piggledy. The Nandi-maṇḍapa outside rests its roof on a number of pillars, some fragmentary, of which the two shown in Plate LV are typical ; these could hardly be later than the 8th century, though they may be a little earlier. Inside, in what is almost like a courtyard, there are pillars again from one time Buddhist temples, many of them of very late date, some from the 12th century ; and leaning against walls, or inserted in modern walls, stand a number of Buddhist images, mostly of the late periods, 8th to 12th centuries. In Plate LVI one such statue is seen, showing a woman with a highly ornate head-dress, in the act of removing her one and only garment ; there is a sensuous dwelling on the breasts, which are rather prominent, and both workmanship and style suggest a very late date, perhaps 12th century. To the same period must belong the ornate pillar visible to the right.

Whichever way one travels in this State, the evidence for a long period of Buddhist art is plentiful. Far to the north-east, in Mayurbhanj, Buddhist remains are found in abundance—not on the great rivers of Orissa either—and the Khiching Museum contains some striking specimens that stand next to equally fine Brahmanic work. The lovely Buddha in the earth-touching attitude, under the Bodhi tree, shown in Plate LVII is now in the Khiching Museum, and was found at Itamunda, a few miles away. It is a highly sophisticated and sensitive piece, with a strong feeling for formal and decorative perfection. The very lotus leaves and the decora-

1a. Vasu (pl. 43) says this image, "the largest Lokeśvara", came from Kasba.

tive treatment of the *ashvattha* tree are eloquent of the period devoted to decorative graces, the high baroque ; and a critical observer might object that in all this search for decorative elegance the artist did not succeed in giving his Buddha image a suitable expression. It is an almost supercilious face, the eyes half open and eyebrows far too highly arched ; and the treatment of the tree is also objectionable inasmuch as it has become so small and summary that one gets the impression that it grows out of the head coif of the Buddha rather than shelters the meditating master. But these affectations are part of the baroque attitude, and the style must be accepted as an expression of the tastes of a particular period.

Good and bad and mediocre specimens of Buddhist art are found everywhere ; the bad, surely, invariably of the period of decline. To this age do I ascribe all the colossal Buddhas at Ratnagiri, Udayagiri and elsewhere an age in which the worshipper was impressed by the large size of the image rather than its inherent beauty. Colossal images are always signs of priestly effort to frighten or cajole the poor faithful ; thus it was in ancient Egypt during the Pharaonic despots, whose enormous and terrifying colossi kept the masses in subjection and fear. When Buddhism declines, some similar psychological reason must have driven the priesthood to resort to colossal images—altogether non-existent in the classic times. The earliest gigantic Buddha images, in Afghanistan and in Indian Gandhara, date from the 7th century A.D., that is, a period that marked the decline of Buddhism in the North-West ; in Eastern India, where Buddhism flourished much longer, the colossal Buddha statues are all of a later period.

The gigantic Buddha statue, half buried in the ground, at Udayagiri, next door to Ratnagiri (Plate LVIII) is typical of this late period. Like the colossal Buddha in the Mahāvihāra at Ratnagiri, it is made of a number of stone slabs, and set against a stone masonry wall, behind which there was an earlier brick wall. The head is far too large, and the arched eyebrows curve down to meet over the bridge of the nose in the form of a broad V. One cannot deny some quality in the shape of the face, tending towards an oval with a narrowing chin ; but the eyes are far too large, and the forehead has an unpleasing broadening because of this disproportionate factor. The brick wall behind is of strikingly good quality, and offers high hope that a monastery of a much earlier date would be found if excavations were carried out.

Among the images that have been standing on top of the mound of Ratnagiri before the excavations began, is the handsome, life-size Tārā in Plate LIX. This is 175 cm high (5′ 9″), and thus slightly higher than the one carried from here to Patna, described by Dr Sahu as the largest.[2]

2. Sahu, *BiO*, p. 195 and fig. 32.

The Patna Museum specimen is more graceful and the carving is bolder; but, perhaps, the little scenes of peril in our present example are better carved. For this is the *Ashṭamahābayā Tārā,* the protectress in the Eight Great Perils, such as highway robbery, fire, shipwreck etc. I have already referred to the illustration of the shipwreck in this image, when I proposed the hypothesis (p. 28) that Buddhism was mainly supported by the merchants who became wealthy in the overseas trade. Readers will see a rather realistic representation—bottom-most panel, left side—of a ship being tossed by angry waves, the mast toppling over, and the desperate mariner or merchant crying out in fervent prayer to the goddess, raising his hands high in *añjalī mudrā,* palms joined. Above this anecdotic panel, surely based on experience, we have one of the emanations of Tārā, and above that, third panel from bottom left, a highwayman attacking with bow and arrow a lonely traveller, who again joins his hands in supplication to the goddess. Do we have here, too, a hint at the great risks that merchants, travelling with their caravans from city to city, encountered in the robber-infested jungles ?

It is not easy to recognize in this somewhat weather worn slab all the other "great fears", but the bottom-most panel on the right appears to be an attempt to show a great fire, with the supplicating devotee on the left of a large mass of flame. Neither the waist nor the breasts of the goddess are exceptionally well moulded, and the arms too are rather lifeless, and less well done than in the Patna Museum specimen.

A truly bad example of poor workmanship and lack of aesthetic sense is displayed in the squat, top-heavy Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, now in the State Museum, Bhubaneshwar, illustrated in Plate LX. This comes, as Mr Nath of the Museum informs me, from the village of Vajragiri (a remarkable survival of an old Buddhist name), some 12 km off the main Cuttack-Jajpur road, at about milestone 39. Due to the monsoon I was unable to visit this locality, but Mr Nath says that there are in the village ruins of a Buddhist establishment, from which he recovered several images now in the Museum. Others are being worshipped as Hindu gods, such as one the people consider to be the goddess Mahākālī Bhairavī. One of the four arms of this Bodhisattva holds a rather clumsy lotus flower on top of which rests a thunderbolt (*vajra*), and the vajra is repeated in the smaller, attendant image to the left of the main figure's foot. An enormously long hand rests on the head of a four-armed personage on the right, two *vidyādharas* float, carrying garlands, above, and a small devotee is in front of a poorly cut lotus pedestal. The eyes are large and unbeautiful, and the personal ornaments too heavy. Mr Nath thinks that this image might be dated to the 8th century, but I suggest that it cannot be earlier than the 11th.

What the 8th century would produce is best illustrated in the delightful Tārā image at Ajudhya, near Balasore, shown in Plate LXI. Everything here is grace and charm, from the beautifully shaped fingers to the sensuous lips, from the slender waist and small breasts to the gentle swaying of the svelte body. The floral elements are drawn with a fine sense for ornamentalism, and even the halo, exquisitely finished like the jewellery, is a work of decorative composition. Perhaps the head-dress is not as successful as the rest, but the way the beauty of the breasts is emphasized by a transparent *aṅgavastra* and the sacred thread, is characteristic of the love for sensuous beauty developed in the 8th and 9th centuries.

One could refer here to many isolated images, such as those on the Baneshwar Nasi hill or at Baudh. The oversize heterolithic Buddha in front of the Raja's "new" palace at Baudh is not worth much notice ; nor would it be right to treat here of the triple temple of Baudh, often taken for Buddhist work. It is quite unlikely to be that, for we have no Buddhist *vimāna* anywhere so far, and the strangely shaped, octahedral *yoni* in the Rameśvara at Baudh is obviously contemporary with the similarly planned temple ; *ergo*, the temple is not Buddhist but Shaiva.

Much could be said about the numerous scattered Buddhist images, of which many have been noted on the hills adjacent to Ratnagiri, mentioned in Chapter 6 (pp. 46-47). If I do not go into much detail it is partly because many have been published before, and also because, being detached images, their art historical value is somewhat restricted—not their aesthetic value.

The beautiful *Avalokiteśvara Padmapāṇi* illustrated in Plate LXII will serve as a splendid example of that sensitive, handsome Mahāyāna school that flourished in Orissa in the 8th to 10th centuries. Now standing against a modern brick wall and worshipped by the local people, this superbly shaped and beautifully proportioned figure stands with the superb and subtle ease that only the finest baroque can give to its noble creations. Much weathered, it still retains its elegance and grace, and the face, with half open eyes, has a dreamy look, an expression of hope and contentment. Everything is splendidly proportioned, the crown, the face, the lips, the arms, the legs, the feet, with enough personal ornamentation to enrich the surface, without the over-charged ornamentation of later baroque. I am, therefore, inclined to date this image to the 9th century, and then, perhaps, to the first half of it. It now stands, with a number of other Buddhist images, more or less of the same period, on the Lalitagiri or Altigiri hill, a short distance away from Ratnagiri. The sooner this hill is excavated, the better ; already I have been told of images that have disappeared or sold to tourists.

8

The Two Yoginī Temples of Orissa

WE have already discovered, to our distress, that a strictly chronological treatment of the art of Orissa is not possible, not at present. Ratnagiri is not the only example of artistic activity carried on for centuries ; the Jaina caves of Udayagiri-Khandagiri also defy a purely chronological treatment, and when we come to the periods in which Buddhists, Hindus and Jains erected temples and monasteries, or carved images, all over the country, it becomes increasingly difficult to enumerate them century by century, or half-century by half-century. We have roamed in the treatment of Buddhist art well into the 12th century, and I have left almost untouched the contemporary scene among the Brahmanic artists ; yet, from the early 7th century onward there is a flourishing and ever-increasing activity at Bhubaneshwar and elsewhere, reaching its most beautiful expression around 1000 A.D.—at a time when Ratnagiri was at the height of its life.

If, at this point, I turn to two unique monuments erected by one of the many Hindu sects, instead of dealing with the mainstream of Hindu temple architecture at Bhubaneshwar, I have to offer an explanation.

There are very few temples of the Sixty-four Yoginīs in this vast country, India, as far as we know. Here and there, images of the 64 Yoginīs occur in temples otherwise dedicated to some other deity ;* but actual shrines of the 64 Yoginīs are very few. Perhaps the best known, the most often described Temple of the 64 Yoginīs is the one at Bheraghat, not far from Jabalpur town, in Madhya Pradesh. More will be said about this shrine *infra,* and the Reader will find references to earlier communications (by Cunningham, P. C. Mukerji and others) in the Bibliography at the end of this study. Almost equally famous is the unusual, large, oblong-shaped, shrine of the 64 Yoginīs at Khajuraho, overshadowed by the exquisite beauty and fascination of the great complex of temples (about 900 to 1200 A.D.)** that made the name Khajuraho known all over the world ; robbed of almost all statuary, and in a sad state of ruination, the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs at Khajuraho has little of interest to offer. It does not belong to the masterpieces of the Khajuraho group, and is hardly more than a dilapidated curiosity. That there may be some connexion between the strange cult of the sixty-four female deities and the sensuous carvings on the other temples indicating some erotic cult by the Kaulas and Kapālikās, is undeniable. This feeling of some vague connexion is about all that connects this oblong and open arena-like shrine with the creations of the Chandela dynasty.

It is, thus, not of mean interest that the little State of Orissa possesses two shrines entirely devoted to the sixty-four mysterious godlings called Yoginīs.

These two Orissan temples are vastly different from each other in many ways ; in fact so different that it is almost difficult to believe that they belonged to the same cult. There is the simple fact, to be sure, that there are 64 female images in 64 niches, with a Shiva statue in the centre, of sorts ; there is the fact also that both these shrines are circular in shape —not oblong as that at Khajuraho—and that both are open to the sky, as is the Khajuraho example. But these few facts are about all that make for similarity ; as shall be seen, the differences are inexplicable, the iconography of the 64 images differs enormously, the postures, attributes, appearances, character of the goddesses bear only minimal similarities, and there are no two images, as far as I can see, in the two Orissan Yoginī temples that can be safely identified as images of one and the same personage.

Indeed, it cannot be emphasized enough that the entire question of these

* E.g. in the Mahālakshmī Temple at Kolhāpur.

** For this dating see my contribution to Kramrisch, Fabri and Anand : *Homage to Khajuraho* (see Bibliography).

temples as well as the almost totally unknown cult of the Sixty-four Yoginīs bristle with difficulties, the majority of which I have no claim to have solved. Nor do I know of anyone who claims to have solved them, or who would be able to give a reply to the simple question what did the Yoginī cult consist of ? We know very well, indeed, what a Vaishṇava does when he, or she, enters a Vaishṇava shrine ; many of us can give a detailed description of what a Shaiva does when he comes to worship in a Shiva-shrine. Who went to these Yoginī temples, and what did he or she do when he or she was there ? Is it true, as some have suspected, that there were sexual orgies in the arena, or is this pure conjecture, not warranted by any evidence ?*

Architectural Considerations

For those who talk glibly about the unity of all Indian religions, and who reject out of hand any suggestion of basic differences between this sect and that, it is necessary to point out, to start with, that the very structure of these Yoginī temples is basically different from Brahmanic or other Hindu shrines. There is more similarity between a Christian church and a Khajuraho temple than there is between any Khajuraho or any Orissan temple and the two shrines at Hirapur and Ranipur-Jharial, dedicated to the 64 Yoginīs. The entire architectural conception of these Yoginī temples is basically different and belongs to another world.

These two temples belong to the finest period of Orissan temple architecture ; the Hirapur temple to the 9th century A.D. and the Ranipur-Jharial temple to the 10th. At this time the Baitāl Deul, the Paraśurāmeśvara and the Gaurī temple at Bhubaneshwar were all completed ; the lovely and little known temple on the Mahanadi island of Siṁhanātha had been standing for a century and a half at least ; that little masterpiece, the Mukteśvara was erected in this period, and the finest of all, the Rājarāni was almost ready—to mention only a few more celebrated architectural creations. *None of them bear any resemblance to the two Yoginī temples.*

For the two Yoginī temples possess no *vimānas* or *śikharas* (spires), no *maṇḍapas* or temple chambers ; no *garbha-gṛihas* or Sanctums, no main cult image, such as a *liṅga* or phallus, or a central statue of a divinity ; no roof at all ; the outline of the Yoginī shrines is fundamentally different from that of any of the contemporary (or earlier, or later) Orissan temples ; their sculptural ornamentation is totally different from Brahmanic and Buddhist structures (for much of the *Mahāvihāra* of Ratnagiri belongs to this period too) ; and, in brief, with their circular shape, not covered

* See, however, Appendices I and II.

by any roof, they resemble no Hindu shrine at all. Nor is the remote similarity to the Buddhist stūpa of any validity or interest, as the outline is a tenuous identity; for the Buddhist stūpa is an entirely solid, closed hemisphere, and not a circular wall, with an open arena within, not covered by any roof at all, as the two Yoginī temples are.

Where there is so marked a difference in architectural forms, one may be certain that the reasons are functional : the kind of ritual or observance carried out in these Yoginī shrines must have been different from those for which Brahmanic and Buddhist temples were made.

I find it strange that very little reference is made to these fundamental differences in the existing histories of Indian art. There is no reference to this architectural form in my own *Introduction to Indian Architecture,* but then that is a rather small book. Coomaraswamy refers to the Yoginī temples *en passant,* most books completely ignore them. Some authors make much of the difference between the Northern Indian and the Southern Indian styles of architecture; yet, if you consider those differences, they are nowhere as essential, as basic, structurally as marked, as between any form, manner or style of temple architecture, Hindu or Buddhist, Northern, Southern or mixed, on the one hand, and the arena-like plan of the Yoginī temples, open to the sky. The *śikhara* might have become unimportant in Tamilnad where, for functional reasons, the entrance gate developed into the superb and mighty *gopura,* far more imposing than the much smaller Sanctum; but southern temples still possess *śikharas* (spires), and are very much covered with roofs, just as in Northern India, and they still have pillared halls of one kind or the other.

All these essential features are totally absent in the Chauṅsat Joginī temples. In other words, unsung and unobserved, here is a vastly different form of Indian temple architecture, hardly known, and not mentioned from the time of Tāranātha almost to the present day.

The Two Yoginī Temples in Orissa

The two shrines under discussion are known as *Chauṅsat Joginī* (modern pronunciation) or the sixty-four Yoginīs, and are at Hirapur and at Ranipur-Jharial.

Ranipur and Jharial are two villages, in fact, situated on the two sides of an enormous outcrop of a sheet of rock, markedly resembling the back of a whale, covered with some fifty temples, mostly of moderate size; one of them is a magnificent, and little known, brick temple of vast historical importance. This sheet of rock can best be reached by a bad, ill-maintained road of about 29 km (19 miles) from a place consistently misspelt, even in maps, as Titlagarh. The correct name, however, is Titilagarh. It lies in the District of Bolangir.

As to Hirapur, it is a very small village, a hamlet, about 20 km from Bhubaneshwar, part of the way being by a well-made road, the last few miles being exceedingly difficult, in fact, not jeepable during the rains. The Yoginī Temple at Hirapur was discovered by my worthy friend, Mr. K. N. Mahapatra who published a report on it. It is now a protected monument under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act. It is worthy of mention that none of the approximately fifty temples at Ranipur-Jharial is protected ; and, unfortunately, numbers of sculptures have already been removed from the Joginī Temple there.

Mr Mahapatra dates the Hirapur shrine to the 9th century A.D., an eminently reasonable date that I readily accept on stylistical grounds ; the Ranipur-Jharial Yoginī temple has been dated about one hundred years younger, *i.e.*, to the 10th century. Whilst this is well warranted on the whole, I would suggest the very end of the 10th century, or even the beginnings of the 11th—for reasons that will become evident later in this study.

Architectural similarities are marked. Both these temples are circular. They consist of a round wall, not much higher than a tall man (I measured the height at Hirapur, it is 6 feet 2 inches, when you stand inside, on the paved floor, varying by a few inches here and there), and neither of them had ever possessed a roof. They are rather like a round arena, a kind of large pit, with a single entrance on one side only. This entrance is very narrow at Hirapur, and was probably closed by a wooden door when the esoteric, and may be orgiastic, cults went on inside. The entrance at Ranipur-Jharial is much broader. Here there are distinct marks of a pivot hole for a door.

Both temples have a rather small shrine in the centre of the circus. The shrine at Hirapur has been foolishly and inexpertly "repaired" with modern arches, though the Shiva image is the original icon in this odd, square, covered structure.* But the central shrine at Ranipur-Jharial appears to be unaltered.

The Ranipur-Jharial arena is far, far larger than that at Hirapur, and completely lacks the enchanting, mysterious, secretive and intimate atmosphere of the fascinating shrine at Hirapur, a masterpiece from any point of view. That such an atmosphere is not purely an individual reaction but may be termed, as it were, a "built-in" element, purposefully created, may be seen at once by anyone visiting these two greatly differing shrines.

I have to return to the circular shape in this connexion.

This circular shape connects these two shrines more with the Buddhist stūpa than with the Hindu shrine. This is interesting, especially in the

* Revisiting Hirapur in June 1965 I found the Shiva image removed.

9th-10th centuries, when Buddhism was penetrated by Brahmanical elements, and in matters of pantheon, forms of worship, as well as in architectural forms such as the lately created Buddhist "temple", there were increasingly less dissimilarities between the two faiths.

The Hindu temple is oblong or square in essence, however many decorative insets and extrusions later times produce. The Buddhist stūpa is essentially a hemisphere, a circular dome, even if some are given square bases in later days ; and it is a *solid* hemisphere.

The Yoginī temples are also round, but *not solid*. It is as if, in his search for the mystery of the stūpa, the architect had torn open the roof, the dome, and had peeped inside ; and what he had found there was the mystery of creation, re-creation and the origin of all life, all beauty, all happiness, in the feminine element. For those inner walls of this arena are covered from end to end with women only—not one male figure among them*—and what they symbolize or stand for is unknown.

Who Are the Sixty-four Yoginīs ?

Who are these sixty-four Yoginīs ? I have been unable to find out much about them ; and I seem to be in good company, for no one seems to have been able so far to give an explanation about their function, their cults and rites, not even their names—though we have a plethora of names, far more than 64, presumed to belong to them.

Mr K. N. Mahapatra of Bhubaneshwar, who discovered the lovely shrine at Hirapur, enumerates every image with a kind of description in his list, but he is unable to give the name of any of them. He told me, when I asked him about this, that he had searched through all Sanskrit and Oriya literature he could think of, but could find nothing more but vague references to the 64 goddesses. If I have been slightly more successful, by finding about a hundred and more names alleged to be those of the sixty-four, it is a kind of Pyrrhic victory, an *embarras de richesse,* for what can one do with well over a hundred names for sixty-four goddesses, hardly any precise enough to connect the name with the images ? With some ingenuity and more guesswork, one can tentatively identify a few of the names, though perhaps never with certainty. The most likely, as will be seen *infra,* is the identification of the lovely "Diana the Huntress" relievo, a girl vigorously shooting an arrow, with the name *vīra-kumārī* or *vīra-kaumārī* (both forms occur thus), or the "Heroic maiden" (Mr Prabhu translates this as "Warrior Virgin", an equally possible version).

* The Shiva is not on the walls. He is in a separate shrine, in the centre, with *ūrdhva-liṅga* (*penis erectus*).

Whilst most of the relievo figures at Hirapur are enchantingly beautiful, doubtlessly seductive, voluptuous looking girls, full of charm, most of them at Ranipur-Jharial are fearful in appearance and some of the names found in lists given in the *Matsya-purāṇa* and the *Bhavishyottara-purāṇa* suggest that they were of both varieties. A name such as *Raktākshī* (Bloody-eyed) or *Bhayankarī* (Fearful) or, worst of all *Yamadūtī* (Messenger of Death) suggests no very pleasant aspects ; on the other hand, *Surāpriyā* means "Fond of wine" and alludes to scenes of jollification, and *Mandodarī* is, of course, the name of the most beautiful frog-princess of legend, so devastatingly lovely that not even Rāvaṇa could resist her charms. *Rūpiṇī* may be interpreted as "Shapely", and there are several other names suggesting not the "fearsome nature of the goddesses" (Mr Prabhu's interpretation) but grace, charm, beauty and seductiveness.

That these Yoginīs are somehow connected with the *Yoginī-kula* cult seems self-evident ; and if so, they must also have some close affiliation with the *Sahaja-yāna* cult.

The Yoginī-kula sect (if that is the correct term ; perhaps "order" would be even more fitting) is regarded as a kind of Buddhist precursor of the later Shiva-Nātha cult ; in one sense, *kula* is made synonymous with *śakti*, the primordial energy, the Life Force, found in the female. Both in Buddhist Tāntrism and in Shaiva Tāntrism the acquisition of this blissful force, this union of the male and the female in physical ecstasy, was a central tenet. To say that this is just another form of Hinduism, is a total misunderstanding of the character of a religion. For the central tenet in one religion may be God (benevolent or furious) ; in another, such as early Buddhism, the victory of willpower over suffering ; in much of the varied forms of Advaita religion the main theme is the intentional union of Self with the World-Self ; and in religions of *Bhakti* or devotion, this central tenet is the total submission of the individual in an act of love to his Beloved Lord.

I see no resemblance, not even a remote one, of any of these beliefs to the Sahaja-yāna or the Tāntric forms. In these "yogic" practices (the word is used in so many meanings that quotation marks are useful), in fact the performers found their *summum bonum* in the intercourse with the female; and one text clearly states that the nearest approximation to heavenly bliss is copulation, and the nearest *locus* or place to heaven is the female organ, the *yonī*.

Similarly, the Sahaja cult demands the satisfaction of all the needs of the physical body, "propitiating human nature with its sex passions and other primitive propensities".*

* Dr Sahu, quoted *infra*.

The Sahaja Cult

Groping in the dark we must now cling to that little piece of certainty, that the Yoginī-kula and the Sahaja-yāna are closely related ; some connexion with the Dākinīs must exist too, as Prof. Sircar tells me, but I know little about that.

It appears that the Yoginī cult has not only externally, in the circular shape of its temples, but also in its basic ideas and practices, its foundations in some late and heterodox forms of Tāntric Buddhism—with hardly any element surviving from early Buddhist ideas—somehow connected with similar notions and cults in the Shivaitic forms of Tāntrism. In both, it appears, the word *yoga* has reverted, as it were, to its original meaning which was *junction, union,* and both tended to give it a strongly physical connotation. To copulate is a mystic process, a union and a bliss. Providence, Fate, Nature or Karma, or call it what you will, has so made the male and the female bodies that it is their union that makes for bliss and repeats the mystery of creation. The Kaula and Kāpālika sects (orders) carried these practices around the year 1000 A.D. to their logical conclusion in their initiation ceremonies they partook of the three things that create "states of bliss", *viz.* wine, women and flesh.

Now the word Sahaja really means "inborn", "innate", "congenital" ; but whilst admitting that the "Path of the Congenital Propensities" includes the satisfaction of all desires, the most fantastic spiritual claims are made for the term *sahaja.* It is pretended by the pandits who make spiritual claims for the most sensuous deeds that *sahaja* is, really, the same as Ātman, Brahman, Nirvāṇa, Asvaghosha's Tathatā, the Absolute Reality of Nāgārjuna, the "Totally Wake Mind" or Bodhichitta and what you will.

My good friend Dr N. K. Sahu in his splendid book, ***Buddhism in*** *Orissa,* gets to the root of the matter (pp. 139-140), and I quote most of what he says there :

"But with such a grandiose conception of the idea of Sahaja, the Sahajayāna remains a way of propitiating the primitive instincts and desires, i.e.—sex, hunger, and the like, and in advocating the principle it challenges all established religions with their rigour of discipline, orthodoxy and formalities. The Advayasiddhi asserts 'There is no need of undertaking pain by fasting and observing rites, nor is there any need of bathing and purifying the body, as well as observing any traditions and formalities whatsoever.' Luipā declares 'Of what consequence are all the processes of meditation ? In spite of all these one has to die in weal and woe. Discard all the elaborate practices of Yogic bandha and false hope for supernatural gifts and take up the cause of Śūnyatā

as your own.' Thus Sahaja-yāna appears as an open protest for all sorts of religious formalism and Yogic rigourism, and it lays emphasis on developing human nature for the realization of Śūnyatā,* the ultimate truth. The Sahajiās even denounce the practice of worshipping the gods and goddesses advocated by Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, and they at the same time assert that all such gods and goddesses, including Lord Buddha, reside in the body of man 'The scholars explain all the scriptures', says Saraha, 'but fail to know that the Buddha resides in the body.' So the Sahajiās profess the principle of satisfying all the needs of the physical body which is the abode of all the tattvas, Pīṭhas and deities, and without which no Siddhi can be attained. This idea of worshipping the physical body, is quite in keeping with the principle of propitiating human nature with its sex passions and other primitive propensities. The whole Yogic process of the Sahaja school is found to be based on a highly sublime aspect of the sex, where the Sādhaka is to embrace and sport with the female Śakti, variously called as the Chaṇḍālī, Doṁbī, Śavarī, Yoginī, Nairātmā Sahaja Sundarī etc. The bliss that comes out of these sexo-yogic practices is generally divided into four stages, *viz.* and this final stage is known as Mahāsukha. . . . "**

From the above quotation it is once again fairly certain that the Yoginī cult was either part of the Sahaja path, or was actually identical with it ; for the female Śakti is clearly identified with Yoginī, the other names given being, strangely enough, either low caste names or the names of aborigines. Precisely what this proves, I cannot say. It suggests that Orissa may well have been the centre of this order, hence the occurrence of the names of two tribes of Orissa, and hence, perhaps, the explanation why in this small State we find two temples of the 64 Yoginīs. There have been many scholars who thought that Tāntrism originated in Orissa, and Dr Sahu himself gives a detailed examination of the question (pp. 141-155) providing rather weighty reasons to support his thesis that Tāntric Buddhism was born in Orissa.

The Names of the Yoginīs

When iconography happens to be such a passionate study with some scholars, it is passing strange that hardly any one, to my knowledge, has

* Śūnyatā, "The Void", is a splendid excuse for proffering the most varied definitions, from Nirvāṇa to sexual intercourse. (C.L.F.)

** *Mahāsukha* means "great happiness".

ever made a study of the iconography of the 64 Yoginīs. This author seriously doubts, after years of search, whether iconographic investigations would lead to many positive results, though they may clarify a few rather obvious attributes.

But the fact simply faces us that *we do not even possess a reliable list of the names of the 64 Yoginīs;* all the names at my disposal run into more than a hundred, and almost all lists run into 65, not 64. But worse than that, these lists do not tally, and many names that occur in one list are not found in others, and *vice versa.* To mention one example, the "Winelover (Surāpriyā) quoted above is unknown in the inscribed list at Bheraghat; or take Siṁhamukhā, presumably the same as Siṁhamukhī (as given in the *Skandapurāṇa* (verse 34); there is no such name at Bheraghat, though one inscription there reads Siṁhānanā, which may well be identical. There is, to be sure, a Mātṛikā called Nārasiṁhī; but then, whatever some people may think, the connexion with the five, seven, eight or nine Mothers is only a vague probability. When, one may ask, and how, did the five, seven, eight or nine Mothers turn into 64? One suggestion, made during a discussion at the 26th International Congress of Orientalists at New Delhi in January 1964 was that there were the eight Mātṛikās, each with eight attendants, and that this developed into 64 goddesses. There is a distinct possibility here, but it involves some arithmetic problem. For, if the eight Mothers each had eight attendant Yoginīs, the attendants alone would make 8×8=64, and where are the additional eight Mothers left? Yet it appears that the seven or eight Mothers are, in one way or other, incorporated among the 64 Yaginīs, the Bheraghat list containing such names as Indrāṇī, Vārāhī, Brahmāṇī and Vaishṇavī.

I give a list of the 65 or rather 66 names according to Dr Karambelkar as an Appendix; here I append the *Skandapurāṇa* list in Sanskrit and in transliteration

गजानना[1] सिंहमुखी[2] गृध्रास्या[3] काकतुण्डिका[4] ।
उष्ट्रग्रीवा[5] हयग्रीवा[6] वाराही[7] शरभानना[8] ॥ ३४ ॥

उलूकिका[9] शिवारावा[10] मयूरी[11] विकटानना[12] ।
अष्टवक्त्रा[13] कोटराक्षी[14] कुब्जा[15] विकटलोचना[16] ॥ ३५ ॥

शुष्कोदरी[17] ललज्जिह्वा[18] श्वदंष्ट्रा[19] वानरानना[20] ।
ऋक्षाक्षी[21] केकराक्षी[22] च बृहत्तुण्डा[23] सुराप्रिया[24] ॥ ३६ ॥

कपालहस्ता[25] रक्ताक्षी[26] शुकी[27] श्येनी[28] कपोतिका[29] ।
पाशहस्ता[30] दण्डहस्ता[31] प्रचण्डा[32] चण्डविक्रमा[33] ॥ ३७ ॥

शिशुघ्नी[34] पापहन्त्री[35] च काली[36] रुधिरपायिनी[37] ।
वसाधया[38] गर्भभक्षा[39] शवहस्ता[40] ऽऽन्त्रमालिनी[41] ॥ ३८ ॥
स्थूलकेशी[42] बृहत्कुक्षिः[43] सर्पास्या[44] प्रेतवाहना[45] ।
दन्दशूककरा[46] क्रौञ्ची[47] मृगशीर्षा[48] वृषानना[49] ॥ ३९ ॥
व्यात्तास्या[50] धूमनिःश्वासा[51] व्योमैक[52] चरणोर्ध्वदृक्[53] ।
तापनी[54] शोषणीदृष्टिः[55] कोटरी[56] स्थूलनासिका[57] ॥ ४० ॥
विद्युत्प्रभा[58] बालकास्या[59] मार्जारी[60] कटपूतना[61] ।
अट्टहासा[62] कामाक्षी[63] मृगाक्षी[64] मृगलोचना[65] ॥ ४१ ॥

As Dr Dasharatha Sharma, who published this list in *Varada* (V, pt. 3, p. 53) remarks, there is a possibility that nos. 64 and 65, Mṛgākshī and Mṛgalochanā, are one and the same; they may be translated as "Doe-eyed" and "Doe-look" In that case, not a very convincing one, because both names are given, there would be 64 names in this list. They are in transliteration as follows

Gajānanā, Siṁhamukhī, Gṛghrāsyā, Kākatuṇḍikā,
Ushtragrīvā, Hayagrīvā, Vārāhī, Śarabhānanā, 34
Ulūkikā, Śivārāvā, Mayūrī, Vikaṭānanā,
Ashṭavaktrā, Koṭarākshī, Kubjā, Vikaṭalochanā, 35
Śushkodarī, Lalajjihvā, Śvadaṅshṭrā, Vānarānanā,
Ṛkshākshī and Kekarākshī, Bṛhattuṇḍā, Surāpriyā, 36
Kapālahastā, Raktākshī, Śukī, Śyenī, Kapotikā,
Pāśāhastā, Daṇḍahastā, Prachaṇḍā, Chaṇḍavikramā, 37
Śiśughnī and Pāpahantrī, Kālī, Rudhirapāyinī,
Vasādhayā, Garbhabhakshā, Śavahastā, Āntramālinī, 38
Sthūlakeśī, Bṛhatkukshiḥ, Sarpāsyā, Pretavāhanā,
Dandaśūkakarā, Krauñchī, Mṛgaśīrshā, Vṛshānanā, 39
Vyāttāsyā, Dhūmaniḥśvāsā, Vyomaika, Charaṇordhvaḍḍak,
Tāpanī, Śoshanīḍḍashṭiḥ, Koṭarī, Sthūlanāsikā, 40
Vidyutprabhā, Balakāsyā, Marjārī, Kaṭapūtanā,
Aṭṭahāsā, Kāmākshī, Mṛgākshī, Mṛgalochanā. 41

Even a most casual glance at the list of the Yoginīs at the Bheraghat temple will show that any similarity in names is, to put it bluntly, purely coincidental. Tāpanī happens to be no. 9 at Bheraghat (though it can also be read as Jayantī), and no. 54 in the *Skandapurāṇa*, Vārāhī is no. 7 in the latter list, and is found as no. 40 at Bhgh. One may be tempted to

equate the Bhgh no. 58, Siṁhānanā with the Siṁhamukhī, no. 2, of the *Sk.p.* And that is about all two identical names and one or two somewhat similar ones. The rest might well belong to another religion or sect.

As will be seen in the Appendix, Mr Karambelkar's list also amounts to 66 and not 64; besides, there are local names, perhaps, that swell his list to 79 names. It is also important to observe that the connexion with the mother goddesses is most tenuous. Not only do they not all occur in either of these lists, but the few that occur in one are absent from the other. This line of research does not seem to lead anywhere. Any connexion with the Mothers must have been past history, and there has been, as I venture to conjecture, a wholesale identification with, and elevation to divine rank, of small local godlings, perhaps in the same way as popular belief in local Yakshīs entered rapidly into Buddhism. These little local godlings, of which you do not hear much in your learned pandits' elevated dissertations, were far nearer to the heart of the simple people than the Great Gods of the Sacred Books; just as you hear little in your books on Indian art about the thousands of small clay figurines of elephants and horses (Thākurāṇīs, Mātāghoṛās) that can be found under trees throughout the length and breadth of India. They are far more the true religion of the Hindus than Advaita Vedānta.

Hirapur and Ranipur-Jharial

How saddeningly ignorant we are about the character of the Yoginī sect or order is proved not only by the two lists here enumerated, in which, after all, only two names out of 64 tally completely, but also by an examination of the two temples erected for the service of these Yoginīs in Orissa. One should have thought that two temples built within about a hundred years in so small an area and supposed to be erected for the practice of one cult in one small State would bear considerable similarity to each other. You have many examples of that sort. There is the Mukteśvara Temple at Bhubaneshwar, datable to about 900 A.D., and there is the Rājarāni Temple, not far away, completed about a hundred years later the similarities are most striking, the dissimilarities are confined to minor matters. Structurally, functionally, in the composition of the main parts (*maṇḍapa, vimāna*) there is no basic difference; the later shrine is larger, its proportions far more perfect, and the sculptural decoration more beautiful and in a more developed baroque style; and yet there are individual figures on the walls of the Mukteśvara with such great affinity to similar figures on the Rājarāni that the hundred years seem to vanish.

How, then, can one explain the fantastic differences that separate the two 64 Yoginī temples at Hirapur and at Ranipur-Jharial ?

These two temples belong to two worlds, as it were, and it is permissible

to say, quite simply, that one is a masterpiece of art of which any country and any period could be proud, whilst the other is a monstrously bad piece of work, of no discernible merit. The figures of the goddesses at Hirapur are full of variety, inventiveness and originality, whilst those at Ranipur-Jharial are monotonous, tiresome, repetitive, unbeautiful.

Whilst the ladies in the Hirapur shrine are shown in a great variety of poses, those at Ranipur-Jharial are, without exception, all in one and the same dancing pose, an *adavu** with widely spread knees. Why do all the women dance here ? Was dancing part of the esoteric practices carried out, at dead of night (the *Bhavishyottara-purāṇa* states that the invocation of the Yoginīs *always takes place at midnight* on a New Moon day), in these arenas, combined with wine and meat and erotics ? That *devadāsīs,* dancing girls attached to Hindu temples, were women of easy virtue who contributed to the prostitution of many religious practices, are widely known and universally accepted.

But then, why are none of the women at Hirapur dancing ?

Description of the Hirapur Shrine

Of the two monuments the Hirapur temple is the older and, as said before, aesthetically far superior. With its smaller size, its compact design, admirable proportions, its hard, close-grained stone sculptures neatly arranged in small niches, and the exquisite variety and beauty of many of the poses, it is not only a fascinating monument, it exercises a strange effect on the spectator. The writer of these lines does not hesitate to own that he felt here an almost mystic power in the *intensity* of the feeling that created this lovely temple, whereas at the much larger and less beautiful temple at Ranipur-Jharial he experienced a sense of diffuseness and repetitiveness, a monotony in the sculpture—elements that are totally absent at Hirapur. The Temple of the Sixty-four Yoginīs at Hirapur is a great work of art, an exquisite monument, born out of emotional inspiration. There is an atmosphere here such as pervades the great cave temples of India, or the fine cathedrals of the West ; yet the circular temple of Hirapur is hardly bigger than a large room.

Contrary to the Ranipur-Jharial temple, which is bare masonry on the outside, the Hirapur temple contains nine sculptured panels on the outer walls, each in a niche (Plate LXIII). The use of niches in an *otherwise plain wall* is reminiscent of Buddhist practice rather than Hindu. This needs further argumentation, for which this is not the place ; I have given detailed proof of it elsewhere (p. 30).

These nine panels are larger in size than the panels of the Sixty-four

* *adavu* is the technical term in the *Bhārata Nāṭya Śastra* for a set posture.

Yoginīs within the temple ; and every one of these shows a lovely woman in relievo carving, standing under an umbrella, held by an attendant of miniature size ; and all the nine lovely ladies stand over a delicious, smiling face surrounded by a vast amount of hair, somewhat in the shape of an arch. These lovely little detached heads, with the Mona Lisa smile, are works of art of great sophistication and beauty. Various animals flank this mask at the base. As is the case with many of the animals within the shrine, these beasts are the least well-done portions of the carving ; often it is, in fact, extremely difficult to guess what animal is intended. Evidently, this sculptor, a specialist as it were in feminine bodies, was rather weak at depicting animals. In this case I have the impression, rather vaguely, that the two little beasts are dogs.

An examination of Plate LXIII, one example of the nine outside panels,* will instantly show that the artist's aim was to depict feminine charm and seductiveness. The thrice-bent pose (*tribhaṅga*), the gentle, delightful smile (seen even in the present bad state of the panel), the firm beauty of the breasts, almost overflowing with milk, the lovely curve of the hips, the charm of the limbs, the splendid contrast of hard jewellery with the soft flesh of the femine body, all declare the beauty of the weaker sex. There is a sensuous juxtaposition of the tension in the straight legs as against the soft, curving lines of the upper body—a mannerism so well known from Khajuraho with its long, stiff legs. The period is almost the same to be sure.

She appears to hold a cup, presumably to catch the overflow of the milk of her bosom ; or, maybe, she is offering a cup of wine. She is dressed in a diminutive piece of cloth, ending well above the knees, hardly covering any but a small portion of her thighs ; and she wears a great deal of jewellery. The looped string of pearls falling from the belt in later Orissan sculpture like a series of UUU shapes, is conspicuous by its absence. The hair is dressed into a large, thick coif on the side, not yet as enormous as at, say, Konarka (1250 A.D.) but characteristic of the period around 900 A.D. (Compare Plates XIII and XIV, the latter from Orissa, in my *History of Indian Dress*). Thus the head-dress, jewellery and the not yet exaggerated *tribhaṅga* pose all suggest a date shortly after 800 A.D.

Mr K. N. Mahapatra refers to the "nine Kātyāyanīs" on the outer surface of this temple in one of his learned articles.** But I only know of

* In 1965 I found marked deterioration in the condition of the relievos.

** K. N. Mahapatra, "Studies in the Naishadhacharita of Sriharsha", *Orissa Historical Research Journal,* VIII, 1 (1959), p. 70, note 12. But see Sahu, ***Buddhism in Orissa,*** p. 145.

one goddess Kātyāyanī, and have to leave this matter to iconographers to unravel. Other point to observe is the great thickness of the umbrella handle, presumably done this way because a thin piece of carving would have broken quicker ; that there is no halo, so that one is not quite sure whether a goddess is represented or a queen the latter is always shown with an umbrella. Actually, she approximates more the character of those much loved darlings of Buddhist and pre-Buddhist folkore and art, the *yakshīs* and *vṛkshakās,* nymphs and dryads. The absence of a tree is against the identification with a wood-nymph, but *yakshīs* are frequently shown with animal vehicles, and the connection between Yoginīs and the old *yakshīs* is, in any case, highly probable. The name and some attributes have changed, but *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.* Indeed, inside the temple, next to the entrance, there is one beautiful panel in which the Yoginī stands under a large-leaved tree, very much like the *vṛkshakās* of old. (Plate XII).

These nine panels, and the very small entrance door relieve the monotony of the circular masonry on the outside (Plate LXIV). As the pictures might mislead the spectator, it may well be necessary to emphasize that the height hardly exceeds that of a very tall man. The structure in the centre of the arena, visible behind the wall, is a late and incongruous "renovation" with four modern arches with voussoirs, and constructed of much smaller and better finished blocks of stone. Small and well designed eaves protect every niche over the nine ladies with the umbrellas. The entire temple is devoid of ornamentation, except for faint signs of *chaitya* window shapes, very shallow, over each Yoginī image inside. The outline of the exterior face is fairly clear from my sketch in Fig. 1 here, made on the spot in 1960.

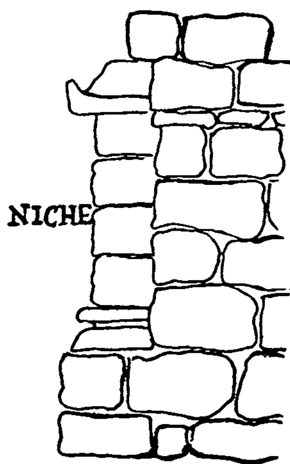


Fig. 1

The inside of the Hirapur shrine is well seen in Plate LXV which shows about one-fourth of the arena, and a corner of the central shrine, the lower part of which is original ; the newly added four arches on the four sides are not seen here. A man of average height can reach the top of the circular wall. The floor is paved with fine large slabs of stone, neatly set.

The portion shown here is enough to suggest what the visitor at once

observes, *viz.* that there have been several sculptors at work, or that sculptures were commissioned, one by one, by donors, perhaps at various times ; as a result of which some slabs of relievo images are larger than others, and that the small niches in which each Yoginī figure is set, cut in this hard, blackish stone, are unequal. Some are taller than others, others are broader, and there is a certain uneveness, lack of overall planning and execution that suggest that this temple, as so many shrines in India (*e.g.* Bharhut) was erected by what today would be called "by subscription".

I think I can discern at least two "hands" at work, and a longer examination may lead to more positive results. It seems to me that one of these two sculptors likes to present his Yoginīs in erect posture, standing on, say, a lotus, or some animal *vāhana*, or water, or on a kind of platform (once it looks like a small stool with four legs), but always rather static—not rigid, stiff, or lifeless, but in a quiet posture, both feet on the ground.

But the other "hand" revels in lively movement, showing the feminine body in vigorous action, with an *élan* that is often powerful and forceful, legs frequently spread out. And though many of the faces have been, it seems, deliberately damaged, I venture to suggest that this sculptor is the one who created the most enchantingly lovely heads, with bold curving, thin eyebrows, attractively elongated eye-slits and superbly beautiful smiles. In support of these tentative stylistical impressions I publish here (Plate LXVI) a close-up of one of these faces, a mask of exquisite beauty with an engaging Leonardesque smile, and the loveliest treatment of the cheeks. The richly bejewelled hair-dress, with a diadem and elaborate earrings is characteristic of the 8th-9th centuries A.D., but it is far above the average in quality.

But all this is splendid sculpture—even those with animal or fierce countenances, of which there are quite a few—full of sensuous attachment to the beauty, the softness, the curvatures of the feminine body. Even the most repugnant looking goddesses, with faces of beasts, or teeth protruding, possess handsome figures, with large, firm, erotic breasts, lovely hips, softly undulating and often fleshy arms and legs ; with an unmistakable tendency to show broad ankles, not unlike the sculpture of Aristide Maillol. They are all practically nude, with nothing but a diminutive garment falling from the hip to well above the knee, tightly wound round the thighs, almost like short trousers ; and all are profusely provided with personal ornaments, belts, *mekhalās*, anklets, armlets, bracelets, rich necklaces, enormous earrings (often different in design in the two ears) and crowns or diadems and bejewelled ornaments to crown their vast coif of hair. These hair buns are hanging sideways.

In Plate LXVII I illustrate one of the 64 Yoginīs of Hirapur. This is the relievo panel I sometimes refer to as "Diana the Huntress type", and

venture to identify as possibly the Vīra-kumārī or Vīra-kaumārī. (Heroic Maiden, or Warrior Virgin) of the texts. Her vehicle at the base appears to be either a rat or a hog or a boar, though no tusks are seen ; and she is presented in the act of shooting a feathered arrow from a large bow, of which little now remains. She carries two quivers at her back, full of arrows, and she has strong wrist rings on both hands. Otherwise she is dressed in a tiny garment and plentiful of jewellery, and the vigorous movement of pulling the string of the bow is magnificently shown in a movement as full of tremendous force as it is full of grace. Hips and breasts are exquisitely feminine, whilst the arms and the legs are powerful. This is almost a ballet-like piece of archery, what with the graceful turn of the head and the enchanting smile ; and I do not know of any other example in the whole of Indian art history in which a seductively lovely woman is shown in the act of shooting an arrow. The purpose might be the same as that of Kāma's arrows, though there can be no doubt that here we have a real wooden bow and a real wooden arrow, and not one made of bees or flowers. It is obvious that the sculptor took good care not to hide the bosoms which are still in perfect condition and show with what relish the artist dwelt on these portions.

The following two illustrations are again from the sculptor who liked lively, energetic movements—if such a distinction is justified. The Yoginī in Plate LXVIII seems to be dancing in ecstatic delight, her happiness expressed in a smiling face of great charm. She appears to be holding on to two lotus stalks—or else she appears like an unexpected vision between them, perhaps a spirit of the marshes, a sprite of some lake ? The movement is admirably conveyed—one can clearly see where the missing foot was, just under the tassel hanging from the belt, below the fan-like end of the cloth spread between the two things, not unlike in the Bharata Natya costume invented by Mrs Rukmini Devi Arundale. The artist seems to have achieved this abandoned dancing movement with the greatest of ease. The tassels and the hanging end of the belt swing to this movement ; the muscles around the navel turn with feminine softness to this twist of the body, and even the pendant, hanging under the two small and firm breasts, swings to the dance.

The vehicle is a stag or antelope, much better carved than the *vāhana* on the previous panel, and it is on the scent—not unlike the bull on the famous golden cup of Vaphio. This Yoginī may, perhaps, be identified with Vāyuvenā—on the basis of the vehicle alone. The hair bun worn on the side is enormous, and the personal ornaments are rich, though not over-elaborated. The moulding of the hips and the navel area is most sensual.

And in a temple full of human figures but entirely devoid of any orna-

mental device, floral or geometric, it is pertinent to observe how elegantly the stalks of the lotus are made to curve in sinuous design. This sculptor could have made fine floral ornamentation if he had wanted to. His contemporaries in Brahmanic temples lavishly used floral and geometric devices; but evidently this sculptor's sole interest was the feminine body. This is a matter that bears repetition; for the reader is reminded that the contemporary Mukteśvara and Rājarāni temples are covered with many and varied and superbly executed floral and geometric patterns—whereas there is not one of these found either at Hirapur or at Ranipur-Jharial.

The next illustration, Plate LXIX, is a much damaged relievo panel, yet still a work of considerable originality and merit. The Yoginī is apparently engaged in fastening one of her anklets. The subject has been treated elsewhere, *e.g.* at Khajuraho, on the Jain temple of Pārśvanātha, or on the outer wall of the Śanctum of the Rājarāni at Bhubaneshwar the present solution of the Hirapur sculptor is quite different, and is almost a dancing pose, and I beg to be forgiven if I find it difficult to believe that this has some profound religious and religio-philosophical significance. As a profane non-Śākta I see in this charming figure nothing but a lovely girl in a seductive pose. Except for the *vāhana,* a hog perhaps, or may be a rat, there does not seem to be here any indication of anything supernatural; she might, indeed, be nothing but a dancing girl just fastening her ankle-bells—although there is no visible evidence of ankle-bells, as that portion, alas, has been knocked off, perhaps deliberately.

The posture is difficult (as many a Bharata Natya or Orissi dancer knows only too well), but the artist has skilfully thrown the woman's weight on to the erect leg, whilst the raised leg is tightly pressed against the upright thigh for balance. There is a gentle smile, not too clearly seen in the photograph, and well-distributed personal ornaments in the style of the century. Like the other 63 girls, this Yoginī too wears only a diminutive garment, tightly wound round the upper half of the thigh.

It is now time to deal with some of the standing Yoginīs' relievos that I suggest may be the work of another sculptor.

The goddess illustrated in Plate LXX is one of the few demoniac-looking goddesses at Hirapur (there are many more in Ranipur-Jharial), and is four-armed. Now it is noteworthy, as one of the many discrepancies between these two Orissan shrines, that a large number of Yoginīs in the Hirapur shrine are two-armed, and very few possess four arms; on the contrary, in the Ranipur-Jharial shrine every Yoginī is shown with multiple arms, some with six.

This unpleasant-looking female, with her bulging eyes and large, protruding teeth, is, nevertheless, treated with the same attention for feminine

beauty as the more endearing others, from the head downwards ; for she has a beautifully shaped body ; and one is justified in wondering whether the head is, after all, only a mask. The hypothesis is supported by the important fact that this author has discovered an Orissan temple panel in which masked dancers* are shown in a performance of some ballet, the masks being absolutely beyond doubt attached to the faces of male *danseurs*. In this case, nevertheless, the four arms present a difficulty, and one is bound to come to the conclusion that a supernatural being is depicted.

The garment, a tight loin-cloth, is here a highly ornate affair, showing in low relief stripes of ornamental patterns, mostly flowers ; otherwise the jewellery is similar to that of other Yoginīs in this temple, except for the crown, which is almost in the form of a mitre, and the absence of the large lateral hair bun. The vehicle, again badly carved, may be a stag or a deer.

One of the most graceful and noble creations of this artist is the beautiful lady rising as it were out of the waters, a water nymph or naiad perhaps, wearing a magnificent crown, shown in Plate LXXI. Made of very dark, almost black stone, carved with hard precision, she sways gently to one side and on her beautifully proportioned face she wears a tender smile.** There is a superb ease in the posture, a *soupçon* of a *tribhaṅga* only, the curving lines being all held in carefully marshalled control, the ankles markedly narrower than in the other "Maillolesque" ladies, but the hips, the breasts and the navel are carved with a profound feeling for the feminine form. She too has no lateral hair bun, but her hair appears to be swept up into a flame-like cone held by a coronet ; and she is standing on undulating waters, not unlike a Venus emerging from the sea. I find absolutely nothing either in the Bheraghat list or in the *Skandapurāṇa* list of the Yoginīs remotely suggesting a goddess rising out of the waves ; and one's mind again turns to the old *yakshiṇīs*, the denizens of not only forests but also of waters.

The mystery of all these charmers, who were they, what aspect of life did they symbolize, is vividly in evidence in Plate LXXII. Who is this beautiful woman dressed in nothing but a skirt of peacock feathers? Where, in Indian mythology, does one read or hear of a woman dressed in a skirt of peacock feathers ? Is she a denizen of the forest or of a lotus pond ? Could she be identified with the Yoginī Mānadā of the Bheraghat list, simply because she stands on a lotus ?

* See my article in *Design*.

** I found this goddess in 1965 to be worshipped as "Thākurāṇī", and covered with a sari.

She stands in a pose of ease and charm, one hip raised higher than the other. The face, alas, is much damaged. A *rivière* of pearls falls, looped, between her breasts. This too is a work of great sensitivity, considerable sophistication and no mean sensuality.

One of the most beautifully modelled Yoginīs is the one shown in Plate LXXIII, standing on a parrot. Once again one is reminded of *yakshiṇīs* of Mathurā and elsewhere ; or of the numerous panels on Hindu temples in Orissa, showing a girl at a half open door, looking down the road for the absent lover, whilst a parrot, sitting on top of the open door "whispers in the beloved's ear the sweet words of endearment that the lover had whispered to her when he was here". The connexion is tenuous, but may be of interest.

The only Yoginī whose vehicle is "a bird" in Mr Karambelkar's list is Abheravadinī, and I give this name for what it is worth (which is not much).

She stands at ease, with not much flexion, and her face, once again with that tender smile, is well enough preserved and shows the fine drawing of the eyes, not showing the exaggerated long slit that becomes habitual in the 10th and 11th centuries ; she is full of charm and delicacy. The lateral hair bun is enormous. The garment has no pattern, but is pleated, and has an ornate end, floating to the left of the leg. The ankles are very strong, but the fleshy portions, the breast, the shoulders, the navel, are depicted with sensual delight.

A few more examples from the Sixty-four Yoginī temple at Hirapur will suffice.

The handsomely carved Yoginī in Plate LXXIV stands next to the entrance, and may be identified on the basis of the vehicle, a male ass, as the Yoginī Ṣaṇḍinī of the Karambelkar list. This is the belle below the tree referred to earlier, and the similarity to yakshiṇīs is marked. This is one of the best preserved bodies, though the head is destroyed, and the lower arms are missing, with whatever attributes they may have held. But the body is surely a work of exquisite beauty, with a gently curving sinuousness, rich breasts and most sensitively shaped hips. Far from being terrifying, as Mr Prabhu suggests that all Yoginīs are memories of the terrifying 64 nights of the Nordic home of the Aryans, this lovely girl smiles at us, suggesting happiness and delight. The garment she wears is so thin and clinging that one can discern it only with the greatest scrutiny.

The next one (Plate LXXV) is almost certainly Vārāhī, one of the Mātṛikās, for her vehicle is quite clearly a wild boar, with snout and tusk and all. Far from being a terrifying goddess, this is a beautifully shaped female, with well-developed hips, a truly Leonardesque smile, rich personal

ornaments and a conically piled up hair bun held by a bejewelled coronet. She has two arms, both now broken.

Finally, as a last sample of the bewitchingly lovely sculpture of the Hirapur temple, I illustrate in Plate LXXVI a Yoginī standing on a strange, low stool. This is neither a common pedestal, nor an animal "vehicle", though it seems to me that the legs are zoomorphic. I do not believe that if this were true it would have much significance, for zoomorphic legs for thrones are as old as Buddhist art ; as I have shown elsewhere, some thirty years ago, lion's legs on thrones and seats in Indian art derive from much older Mesopotamian examples, and were common in India too.*

In certain ways the sophisticated and highly evolved artistry of this shrine is well shown in the composition of this delightful figure ; far from placing her feet where you would expect them, in the middle of this pedestal-stool, they are purposefully set to the left, allowing her to sway her delectable body in an elegant manner, lending a much wanted liveliness to a figure otherwise standing still. When symmetry is discarded, when the artist throws his composition out of the centre, art has reached a sophisticated stage, in which elements of surprise and the unusual are desired qualities.

Malraux on Indian Art

Looking back upon the lovely examples of sculpture in the Hirapur temple for the Sixty-Four Yoginīs, what touches the entranced spectator most is the fleshy humanity and the sensual beauty of these belles (the Sanskrit word *sundarī* means precisely that). And one is forced to wonder how M. Malraux could write

> *Ni le bonheur, ni l'interrogation, ni l'homme, n'avait été de hautes valeurs dans les civilisations orientales. Seule, la civilisation égéenne avait parfois pressenti. . . ."* **

And he continues to say that *mouvement* is a Greek invention, unknown to 'oriental art'—a patent absurdity to anyone well acquainted with either Chinese or Indian art, say the vigorous baroque of South India, the admirable flying creatures, floating swiftly through the skies of Ajanta, the turmoil and flamboyant rush of the figures on the vast boulder of Arjuna at Mamallapuram, near Madras.

* "Mesopotamian and Early Indian Art Comparisons", *Melanges Linossier*, Paris.

** *Les Voix du Silence*, p. 78. Translation : "Neither happiness, nor questioning, nor again the human being, were ever high values in oriental civilisations. Only the Aegean civilisation has sometimes had a presentiment. ."

If India's luscious, beauty-loving art knows no happiness, no human qualities, as M. Malraux asserts, how is one to explain the exquisite eroticism of the baroque period, say from the 8th to the 13th centuries, and the obvious delight in feminine beauty that can be seen on the walls of the Ajanta Caves or the much earlier monuments of Buddhism ? Surely, these smiling beauties at Hirapur are satiated with a love of happiness, and the entire semi-philosophical system of the Sahaja-Yoginī cult, in bold denial of asceticism and the mortification of the body, is an eloquent proof of the search for man's bliss.

And as to a lack of questioning, *l'interrogation,* the statement does not bear examination for a single moment. The vast body of Indian religio-philosophical literature, the number of sects and orders running into hundreds, each in search of happiness, contentment, salvation, liberation, all questioning the answers given by other sects and orders, is an apt reply to the untenable and sweeping statement of M. Malraux. Nothing in Indian past was more constant than this questioning, this striving after an answer, this desire to find a reply to the great interrogation What is happiness ?

Description of the Ranipur-Jharial Shrine

The Temple of the Sixty-four Yoginīs at Ranipur-Jharial is later in date, larger in size, much less beautiful in quality, and, if possible, even more unintelligible. The statuary is vastly different from that at Hirapur ; there is not a single well-modelled body ; the animal vehicles (*vāhanas*) are absent ; but animal-headed women abound ; and the majority of them are four-armed or six-armed, holding in their numerous hands such attributes as the thunderbolt.

Every single woman at Ranipur-Jharial is in exactly the same dancing pose, heels together, knees wide apart ; whereas at Hirapur we have found only one girl whose posture strongly suggests dancing, the others are in a great variety of poses. At Ranipur-Jharial even the Shiva image in the central, quadrangular, four-poster *maṇḍapa* is dancing, one foot on his bull Naṇḍi, the other on his son Gaṇesha—surely an unusual piece of iconography—and he is shown *ūrdhva-liṅga* (*penis erectus*).

In fact the differences between the two shrines, as has already been pointed out, are so numerous that the only patently connecting links between the two shrines are (*a*) that both are circular and open to the air, and (*b*) that there were originally 64 female figures in both. Many have been stolen at Ranipur-Jharial, and when I saw the place I counted 48 Yoginīs ; the other niches were empty.

One of the many differences is that there are no niches and no relievo images on the outside of the Ranipur shrine. A good portion of the round

wall can be seen in Plate LXXVII, which shows the entrance, and the central shrine with the Shiva-image behind it. The entrance was originally roofed by a lintel of a single stone, and may be seen in front of the doorway, on the ground, where it fell.

Now a remarkable fact about this 64 Yoginī temple is that outside it, on the two sides of the doorway, there are two very small shrines. One of these miniature shrines is seen in Plate LXXVII, standing to the right of the entrance, whilst in a similar position, on the left side, there is a completely different miniature shrine as a *pendant.* The right-hand shrine, seen in Plate LXXVII is a pure Orissan style tower, the characteristic bee-hive shaped *śikhara,* crowned by an *amalaka* made of a single, round stone, only the pinnacle (the *khapuri* and *kalaśa*) missing; whilst the left-hand shrine, seen in Plate LXXVIII is a typical Dravidian style temple, with a barrel-vault type roof (the *Khākharā* in Orissan architectural text-books, though often referred to also as *Drāviḍa*) on top of which again the *kalaśas* (two or three pinnacles) are missing.

To find here a Dravidian style temple, as a kind of counterpart to an Orissan style temple, as if it were to balance it, is a rather surprising thing. Was it erected in order to satisfy a Dravidian minority? Was it, because the Telugu-speaking element, so strong in the Southern parts of Orissa, towards Andhra, was actively taking part in the Yoginī cult? Geographically Ranipur-Jharial is not far from the border; and Oriya history is closely interwoven with Andhra. Numerous Telugu inscriptions, some as deep inside Orissa as Kheonjhargarh testify to this connexion, on which Mr Ramachandran has made a study.

It must be noted that there are hardly any examples of barrel-vault type roofs in the whole of Orissa, the most famous being the Baitāl Deul at Bhubaneshwar—also dedicated to a Śākta type of cult, though very different from the Yoginī-*kula*—and that is the only Dravidian-style roof among the hundred or so surviving temples (reputedly there were once 700 temples in the *Ek-āmra* country around Bhubaneshwar).

The suggestion holds considerable possibilities, more than would appear at first sight. That Tāntric Buddhism had a great hold on both Orissa and Andhra is well known. Amaravati to a degree, and Nagarjunakonda much more, in their late periods produced not only great art but a marked erotic movement, and late Buddhism at Nagarjunakonda was infamous for its immorality or amorality. I have been told at Nagarjunakonda that the local Telugu name of the mounds, up to the present day, can be translated as "The Harlots' Mounds"—an astonishing survival of a nickname for a thousand and some hundred years. There is also archaeological evidence, for in a chamber attached to the main monastery numerous ancient bangles of women were excavated. Be that as it may, the thought

intrudes that these two rare temples, alone in a galaxy of more than a thousand temples in Orissa, have been created by some kind of overflow of late Buddhist practice in neighbouring Andhra. The indications are vague and far from certain, but they may be taken into consideration by future students of these baffling temples, with their baffling iconography, with their baffling local differences, and with the strange presence of a *solitary Dravidian temple* near the entrance of the Ranipur-Jharial shrine for the Sixty-four Yoginīs. Śaktism, both Buddhist and Shaiva, was strong in Orissa for a period ; but the exact connexion of Yoginīs with these sects is unknown, and demands explanation.

The inside of the Ranipur-Jharial shrine bears much resemblance to that at Hirapur, as can be seen in Plate LXXIX. The wall is higher, the individual Yoginī figures are almost twice the size, the circular arena or theatre is much larger. The central Shiva-shrine is, it appears, in its original state.

The monotonous repetition of one and the same pose in every single figure, without exception, as well as numerous attributes that are again identical, are well enough visible in this Plate : in fact, at first sight they all seem to be alike. All of them have, for example, conical crowns—and none of the fine variety of head-dresses, hair-buns, coronets and tiaras of the Hirapur ladies.

The only male divinity at Ranipur is the Dancing Shiva in his small, central, four-pillared *maṇḍapa* (Plate LXXX). This is a three-headed Shiva, *viz.* Shiva in his three aspects as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer ; he has six arms, the two upper ones holding a serpent, it appears, the middle ones a thunderbolt and a rod ending in a skull, and the two lowermost arms, rather damaged, are not clearly seen, but one probably holds a rosary. As mentioned before, he is *ūrdhva-liṅga,* that is, shown with *penis erectus,* indicating his erotic aspect ; and he is dancing with his two feet on Gaṇesha and Naṇḍi.

The slab with the Shiva sculpture does not fit the *maṇḍapa* well, being much smaller ; but that it is from the same sculptor's hand as all the other female figures, is obvious. It is also made of the same softish, grainy sandstone, rough and badly weathered, of which all the other images at Ranipur are made. This makes comparison with the Hirapur images, carved out of a fine-grained, hard stone, somewhat difficult, for these must have been covered with plaster and painted ; yet even so the poverty of imagination, the lack of skill, the bad craftsmanship and the clumsiness of the execution are patently obvious.

One of the best preserved figures is shown in Plate LXXXI. This is a three-headed, four-armed goddess, with a halo behind the heads ; in one of the hands she holds a thunderbolt or *vajra* (which, as far as I remem-

ber almost all the figures in this temple hold in one of their hands), and thus there is a vague possibility that this might be none other than Brahmāṇī, the female counterpart of Brahmā, and one of the Mothers, mentioned in several lists of the 64 Yoginīs. The upper part of the body is fairly well done, and even the face turned towards us is not devoid of skill, though the eyes are bulging. It is the lower portions that are very poor, with huge feet and badly drawn ankles, and the two thighs quite uneven in size the (proper) left thigh is much fatter than the other. There is no life in this "dancing" pose, she is stiff and lifeless ; and one wonders why the artist left such a large and empty block for a pedestal. Here as elsewhere there are patches of plaster, perhaps *chūnam,* suggesting that the figure looked better when it was painted.

The dancing feet of the goddess are truly monstrous in Plate LXXXII, with a shockingly swollen, enormous ankle in one foot, and ridiculously thin in the other. The (proper) right foot is to all practical purposes a club-foot, or as if she were suffering from elephantiasis—surely not the handsome legs and feet of a dancing girl.

The rest of the body is not so badly carved, the face being rather attractive with its thick lips ; but the whole figure is stiff and motionless, notwithstanding the dancing pose. The breasts are prominent, far too large, and not as well done as in the previous plate—and far less beautifully than at Hirapur.

There is another Yoginī image, illustrated in Plate LXXXIII, which possesses some moderate merit. It is the same pose as all the others, yet the head is slightly tilted, and there is an attempt at a smile. She has four arms, and I cannot make out what attributes she is holding in three hands, but it appears that with the lower left hand she either points to, or touches, her *pudenda.* The movement is not unknown elsewhere, and occurs as early as Bharhut (about 100 B.C.), usually interpreted, doubtless correctly, as a fertility symbol. There is a complicated piece of cloth (?) in folds on the left, and what looks like the remnants of a scimitar ; or is it a ribbon or an ornate end of a sash ? One foot is visible ; it is again hideously large and ugly.

The whites of the eyes—a most important stylistical element in judging the age of a sculpture—are elongated in the manner it was not done in the 9th century, nor is this manner of curving the eyebrows evidenced at that time.

There is no need to repeat this type of illustration when many of the sculptures are so tiresomely similar ; but we must now look at some of the good number of animal-headed women, most of which are badly damaged. As has been pointed out above, at Hirapur there are hardly any of these zoocephalic Yoginīs, instead of which almost all women there

possess an animal vehicle (*vāhana*), though sometimes we have flowers, water or a stool at the base. At Ranipur-Jharial there is not a single example of a goodess with a *vāhana,* but there are numerous zoocephalic female divinities.

Perhaps the best preserved is the one reproduced in Plate LXXXIV, a kind of feminine counterpart of Gaṇesha, the elephant god. She might be identified with Indrāṇī, one of the seven Mātṛikās, but according to Mr Karambelkar's list she might also be the Yoginī Dhaḍharī or the Yoginī Eṅginī, for both the latter are symbolized by an elephant. In this connexion it may be mentioned that any divinity with a vehicle may be (though is not often) depicted in three forms (1) as a human figure with an animal vehicle below or attached to the image, (2) as a human figure with the head of the animal vehicle, and (3) by the animal vehicle alone. To mention one example, Shiva can be shown standing near or facing the bull Naṇḍi whilst he has a human form, or, as a human form with a bull's head (frequently done in Further India), or again by Naṇḍi alone. The same is true of Kalki, the 10th incarnation of Vishṇu, who is shown sometimes in human shape on a horse, sometimes in human shape with a horse's head, and sometimes solely by a horse.

It is thus possible that this Yoginī is, in fact, none other than the Mother Indrāṇī, shown here as a female form with an elephant's head.

The animal head is quite well sculptured, with garlands of jewels on the forehead of the pachyderm. The rest of the figure is poor, with ill-carved thighs, legs and vast feet. She has four arms. The customary vehicle of Gaṇesha, *i.e.* the mouse, is missing ; but then all the other relievos here lack animal *vāhanas.*

Finally, I reproduce in Plate LXXXV a group of three Yoginīs at the Ranipur-Jharial shrine, partly because this gives a good impression of the poor quality of art work here, and partly because all three are female bodies with animal heads, totally devoid of any aesthetic quality, *ergo* in vast contrast to the splendid artistry of the Hirapur sculptor(s).

Their heads are rather damaged and difficult to identify. Judging from the general standard of workmanship, they were not very well done in any case. The central figure seems to have the head either of a goose or sóme other bird, and one of the hands holds what looks like a club. I am unable to identify the other two heads, although it is clear enough that the left side, large, round-headed animal, with short ears, is devouring another animal (or a child ?). The upper part of all the three bodies is not as ill-modelled as the rest, but it is a ready-made formula, a *cliché,* repeated in almost every Yoginī figure in this temple. They are all so similar that one could play "transposed heads" with them.

The thighs, legs and feet are extremely poor work. Observe also, in

this Plate, that the leftmost Yoginī's pedestal has some kind of wavy lines incized, not much suggesting waters ; she carries in one of her four hands a kind of scimitar or broad sword of odd shape, not unlike a cricket bat.

Hirapur and Ranipur-Jharial Comparisons

It is now possible to compare the two Chaunsat Yoginī temples at Hirapur and at Ranipur-Jharial, and to come to an approximate date for the two.

The vast superiority of the Hirapur temple in artistic quality needs no further stressing. The sculpture in that lovely little shrine is the work of a great master, sophisticated, sensitive, full of invention, inspired and delighting in the sensual beauty of the feminine form. The utter monotony of the Ranipur-Jharial panels is only matched by their clumsy, unskilled drawing, a total absence of aesthetic inspiration or sensitivity, and a crude notion of the feminine body.

It has been contended that Hirapur must have been carved "shortly after 800 A.D.". Mr K. N. Mahapatra suggested a 9th century date, correctly, but I am inclined to qualify this now by suggesting that it was very early in the 9th century that the Master of Hirapur completed his work. Nowhere in these figures at Hirapur do we see that exaggerated torsion, the fully bent form of the *tribhaṅga,* the sinuous treatment of the feminine form prevalent elsewhere in Orissa in the mid- and late 9th century work, say at the Mukteśvara Temple in Bhubaneshwar. The freedom of movement is superb, the typical late baroque love for exaggerated flexion is absent.

Neither does the amount and riches of personal ornaments suggest the late 9th century, when there was a marked excess in jewellery, rich, large and multitudinous ornaments. The looped jewel belt is absent.

Finally, the eye-slits. The Hirapur sculptor does not elongate the white of the eye in the manner that became prevalent in the period 850 to 950 (or later) ; not to mention the strongly attenuated eye-slits of the later period.

All these indications lead to the estimate that the Master of Hirapur worked at the very beginning of the 9th century, and a date between 800 to 820 would fit his work well. A careful comparison with datable sculpture at nearby Bhubaneshwar (a day's walk on foot) confirms this estimate.

It is far more difficult to date the Ranipur-Jharial sculpture. An early date is impossible ; in fact, at first sight one would be inclined to give the whole monument a very much later date, a date of decline, perhaps the 13th century. This is, however, impossible on account of some considerations.

Life has gone out of this work, an epigonic artist has been let loose, a man who had no feeling for sensual beauty of form, whose work is characterized by monotony and formalism. There is no inventive genius, no love of new and attractive solutions ; a clumsy "hand" was at work, who worked to a ready-made *cliché*. Some work done in Orissa in the 10th and 11th centuries is exquisitely beautiful, as on the Rājarāni Temple, or the Brahmeśvara, at Bhubaneshwar, not to mention the entrancingly lovely work on the Lingarāja Temple, one of the most perfect examples of high baroque art (about 1050 A.D.). There is no comparison between these mastery relievos and the miserable and amateurish work of Ranipur-Jharial.

What, then, is the explanation ?

The probable explanation is that all this is the work of a "provincial" artist, one cut off from the mainstream of artistic output at the great centres of art, a man of little genius and less inspiration, no feeling for form, a hackworker. Far from Bhubaneshwar and the Ek-āmra country, down to the south of Kalinga, living in a small principality, this small man was called upon by a sect much given to secrecy and seclusion.

Unless we conjecture this provincialism, the work could hardly be earlier than the 12th or 13th century, an unacceptable date. But if we accept the hypothesis that it was an uninspired, local craftsman, a date somewhere around 1000 A.D. is more likely than nearer 900 A.D. Even at that date admirable work was done both in Buddhist and Brahmanic temples—the Ratnagiri Monastery was still flourishing—in Orissa, and this hackworker does not fit into the general mainstream of stylistic development.

9

The Temple Architecture of Orissa

MUCH more has been written and published about the Brahmanic temples of Orissa (Hindu, Brahmanic are used in this book in the same sense) than about the Buddhist period.

Any impression, nevertheless, that our work in the following chapters will be plain sailing, would be wrong. The sum-total of research work is, in this respect too, very little indeed. Dates are uncertain, inscriptions full of difficulties, stylistical studies are minimal ; and what is even worse, almost all connected accounts, including the two best ones, one by the late Mr Percy Brown[1] and another by Dr Sarasvati,[2] confine themselves almost exclusively to Bhubaneshwar and Konarka, neglecting the hundreds of temples in many other places in Orissa, some nearer the coast, some deep inland, and of the greatest importance to a complete study of Orissan temple architecture.

Whilst this study attempts to fill a number of gaps and to present a more reliable account of the stylistical development of the Hindu temple in Orissa, it would be naive to believe that a complete study can be presented

1. See Bibliography at the end of this book.
2. See Bibliography.

today by anyone. The following pages will show how many questions remain unanswered; but not even the following pages can indicate how many temples are left undiscussed. Orissa is chock-full of antiquities never properly studied; it is also extremely rich in ancient shrines still in use, repaired or altered or whitewashed or rearranged out of recognition, yet containing parts of considerable antiquity; and a few of these will be mentioned. Two, in fact, have already been dealt with the Narsinghnath in Sambalpur District and the Kosaleśvara Temple at Baidyanath, Bolangir District, both containing much older portions than has been observed so far. The most famous temple of all Orissa, and one of the most famous in all India, the Jagannātha Temple at Puri, is an example of centuries of whitewashing obliterating almost every evidence of its antiquity and art; a layer of surface coating estimated at over a foot in depth hides every part of the facade, making an antiquarian or artistic study nearly impossible. The collapse of the gigantic tower of the Sun Temple at Konarka has done less harm to that temple than the constant covering of the Jagannātha with endless layers of paint. The temple of Sakhigopal is less than a hundred years old; but the image may well be a thousand years older, if one could only see it.[3] Unhappily, the Kṛishṇa statue is heavily coated with black paint so that the outlines are a thick mass of coating, and one can only make a guess of its high antiquity because a small attendant cowherd girl in a corner of the statute, much less destroyed by overpainting, reveals that the image might well be a masterpiece of late baroque times. Orissa is full of these obliterations, the result of piety.

If, then, much is still unknown and will take a long time before patient detective work and slow persuasion of the priests will enable scholars to inspect and view the large number of half-hidden treasures, we must be content with the many hundreds of temples available for study.

And even then, we are confronted with the problem of how Orissa could have produced such a vast *œuvre* of hundreds of temples, most of them of admirable quality and artistic merit, out of almost nothing, as it were, with no apparent beginning. In fact, the Orissan temple, when it appears on the scene is a complete masterpiece, with no hesitating beginnings, suddenly arriving on the stage, like Pallas Athene who jumped out of Kronos' head, fullly armed, dressed and accoutred.

And why should it have been in Orissa that temple architecture should have reached such excellence in this small State, ravaged by wars and conquests, disproving the Roman adage that *whilst the arms clash, the Muses are resting* ?

3. This author was privileged to enter the temple and inspect the image — but without removing the thick coat of paint. Therefore little can be said about it.

There might be an ethnic and geographic explanation for the splendid flourishing of architecture in this area.

It is a noteworthy fact that the *other* area in India that has produced the most astonishing flowering of the arts is also a "border area" : Ajanta, Ellora, Badami, Aihole and Pattadakal. It is a border area in the sense that in these tracts Dravidian and Northern Aryan civilizations meet and overlap. Like in Orissa, large parts of which belonged for centuries to the Telugu world, in the Ajanta-Badami area too we have had constant shiftings of frontiers, and the population is so mixed that even in recent years it was necessary to adjust the borders, leaving large numbers of Maharashtrians, Konkanis and Andhras discontended. In a similar way, parts of southern Orissa—especially the district of Ganjam and areas in Koraput—have sizeable Telugu-speaking populations ; whereas the Oriyas complain that contiguous areas, such as those round Srikakulam, full of Oriya people and of temples of obvious Orissan architecture, have been demarcated as part of Andhra State.

Much more could be said about this "borderland" spirit. The vast number of aborigines spilling over from Orissa to Andhra do not respect frontier lines drawn in maps, nor it is ethnically easy to say where Madhya Pradesh ends and where Orissa begins. What now belongs to one State belonged to the other some years ago ; why, Telugu inscriptions have been found as deep inland as Sita Binji, in the District of Kheonjhar.

This free mixing of South India with North India is remarkably similar to the case of the Ajanta-Badami area, about which more must be said elsewhere. But the fact is simply this that the peak achievements of Indian art, packed into a small area, are in these two tracts, Ajanta, Pattadakal, Aihole, Badami on the one hand and Orissa on the other where the inventive genius of Dravidian and Aryan blended in happy harmony. In both areas a mixture of styles can be occasionally found "Northern Indian" temples next to Dravidian types cheek by jowl at Aihole, and close together at Bhubaneshwar and Orissa (*e.g.*, Ranipur-Jharial). It has often been asserted that ethnically the Oriya is nearer to the Dravidian than the Nordic Aryan, and the fact that the Oriya language is one of the Sanskrit derivatives is a misleading factor, inasmuch as it makes many people believe that Orissa belongs to the Northern Indian complex of civilization. However that may be—and in Orissa one often wonders where the Dravidian type ends and the "Aryan" type begins—Orissa is indubitably a typical borderland area ; and as in all limitrophe areas, there was a great exchange of manners and influences.

The miracle of Orissan temple architecture, so sudden, so vigorous, so original, is difficult to explain ; it seems to have been difficult already in the times of Tāranātha, who recorded that Orissan temples were a type

apart. The influence of Orissan temple architecture has been felt everywhere; not only in the adjoining Madhya Pradesh where Khajuraho could not have come into existence around 1000 A.D. without the previous four hundred years of development in Orissa, but in the whole of Northern India, in fact as far north as Chamba in Himachal Pradesh where a number of sacred fanes are obvious imitations of the Oriyan style of temple building. Local variations there are, in many places, but a consecutive history of development from about 600 A.D. is nowhere as clearly in evidence as here.

There is a consistency and logic in Orissan temple architecture that is most impressive. The hesitations and experimentations even of Aihole and Pattadakal are almost entirely absent. A few freak buildings exist; notably the Bhāskareśvara (already explained in Chapter 2), the Baitāl Deul at Bhubaneshwar, and the two Yoginī temples just dealt with. But after a quick and brilliant start around 600 A.D. the Orissan architect rapidly finds his own style, and then unhesitatingly bursts into a passionate and almost frantic activity, raising temple after temple, always sticking to his well-established style, always ready to make minor changes, but never stopping until in 1250 A.D. he raises the ultimate and triumphal Sun Temple at Konarka. Not being able to add a jot or a tittle more to the greatness of temple architecture, he seems to have exhausted himself in six hundred years of restless work, his art declines into repetition and imitation he can do no more.

* * *

That Orissan architecture appears so suddenly and so fully conscious of what it was doing, must be partially, no doubt, due to the great Buddhist architects that preceded the Brahmanic. The evidence on the sculptural side is overwhelming. Buddhist sculpture in the 6th to 8th centuries in this State was superb, unequalled or hardly equalled by any other part of India; and the late Mahāyānic images of gods come so near to the contemporary sculpture of Hindu gods that a continuity cannot be doubted for a moment. A Lakulīśa is a child of the Buddha image and has often been mistaken for it; and a Lokeśvara can hardly be called an icon essentially different or even somewhat different from similar images in the Hindu pantheon. We are not talking of small iconographic differences : we are talking of style.

The evidence in architecture is less forthcoming; mainly, undoubtedly, because so little has been excavated so far in Orissa. The first major excavation ever carried out in this State, at Ratnagiri, brought clear evidence of great Buddhist architecture, formerly quite unknown in Orissa. And

further excavations will, without a shadow of doubt, support the contention that Hindu temple architecture had burst into perfection so rapidly precisely because the ground has been so well prepared for it by Buddhist monastic and ecclesiastic architecture. The little temple at Ratnagiri (Plate XLVIII) could easily be mistaken for an early Hindu temple.

And yet the invention of the temple tower remains a puzzle.

How is it that even the first temples so far known possess *śikharas,* or, as they are called in Orissa, *vimānas.* At Badami and Pattadakal and Aihole the slow struggle for raising one end of the temple to an impressive height can be followed, almost step by step, from the flat-roofed and towerless *maṇḍapa,* through the Lād Khān and the Durgā and the Shiva temples at Badami, exactly as the evolution of the heightened roof at Mamallapuram, near Madras, can be seen from the earlier Rathas to the Shore Temple.

Very little of that can be observed in Orissa. The flat-roofed *maṇḍapa,* as will be explained presently, naturally develops into the pyramidal *piḍhā deul,* step by step. But not so the *vimāna.* The earliest known temples in Orissa already possess a tower ; in fact, they *are* a tower, and no more. They are small first, and their height rises gradually ; their shape also unfolds into greater and greater sensitivity into the lovely thing that the Liṅgarāja tower is or the Rājarāni. But some genius here must have realized from the very start that a temple must be a lofty thing, reaching out above the houses of common mortals, to declare the greatness of the gods.

There is ample evidence that the *maṇḍapa** was added later, and equally certain that further additions, always along a single axis, one next to the other, such as the *bhoga-maṇḍapa* (hall of offerings) and the *nāṭya-manḍir* (hall of dance and music) did not exist when the tower-shaped sanctum, the *vimāna* was in use, solitary, in the earliest times.

It is also readily intelligible why the Orissan temple, with very, very few exceptions, became astylar. The tower did not demand columns, it was built up of a small structure of four equal sides, and the roof was a corbelled construction, gradually narrowing, course by course, covering the opening over the sanctum, until it could be raised to a lofty tower. There was no need for a pillar or more in this type of structure. And though a few early temples, notably the Paraśurāmeśvara at Bhubaneshwar, resorted very early to the creation of an adjoining *maṇḍapa,* imitating in these early attempts the columniated halls of the Buddhists, the Hindu architect

* It would not be far off the mark to call the Orissan *maṇḍapa* the *"prayer-hall",* and the *garbha-gṛiha* the "sanctum".

soon found that he could make a corbelled roof over the *maṇḍapa* too, without the help of pillars.

* *

The "gap of eight hundred years" of which previous students complained, from the Jaina caves to the "earliest temple of all", the Paraśurāmeśvara (dated by many to the 8th century) does not really exist. Prof. R. D. Banerji erroneously dated the inscription in the Paraśurāmeśvara to the 8th century; and though this has been effectively contradicted, and though Dr. K. C. Panigrahi in his fine new book (*Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneshwar*) comes to the correct conclusion that this temple is, really, datable to the 7th century, the real "gap" is in our consciousness mainly because (*a*) we look only at Hindu temples and forget the many Buddhist monuments, and (*b*) almost all investigation has been concentrated on Bhubaneshwar. The Kushāna evidence from Sisupalgarh fills the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., the new finds of this author in Sambalpur district carry on the story into the 5th, 6th and perhaps 7th centuries, and Ratnagiri carries us back to at least 550 A.D.

This has to be mentioned here, for the sudden and splendid evolution of the Hindu temple in Orissa can only be understood if we frankly face a long period of Buddhist predominance, bridging the "gap" between the 1st century A.D. and the 6th with nothing but Buddhist monuments—and surely, some Jain monuments too. Many of these monuments have never been excavated, and will, one may confidently prophesy, come one day to light. Others will be seen in transfigured temples, such as the Kosaleśvara that has been "masked", superficially, into a Brahmanic temple, but which contains much evidence of earlier Buddhist work, including superb mannerist sculpture, earlier than anything now seen in the surviving Brahmanic temples at Bhubaneshwar. One of the most striking discoveries of Dr Panigrahi is a small piece of ancient carving, no doubt Buddhist, re-used in the Siddheśvara Temple, and illustrated in Fig. 9 of his book. Other fragments of earlier temples, now incorporated in later structures, have been mentioned by other scholars. All this is a broad hint to look for Buddhist monuments *inside Bhubaneshwar and the Ekāmra country,* an area where isolated pieces of Buddhist railing, old Yaksha images and their like have been turning up. A short distance away were the great Buddhist settlements of Ratnagiri and the two sister hills only a vast and prosperous community of the Buddhists could have supported these large establishments, and they are bound to have made temples in the Mahāyāna period, long before Hindu revivalism commenced building the lovely temples of Bhubaneshwar.

It is true, to be sure, that we have no evidence of what these Buddhist temples looked like, with the sole exception of the foundations of the little temple at Ratnagiri (Plate XLVIII) and some hints at Bauddh. But no science and no learning of any kind can get on altogether without hypotheses and conjecture, and it is not difficult to conjecture that the Buddhist Mahāyāna temples of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. must have been low and of simple outline, rather like Temple No. 17 at Sanchi or the shrine of Lād Khān at Aihole, with early attempts at raising a small śikhara at one end. Nor is it impossible to conjecture that the śikhara proper was well on the way to development by 600 A.D., when the Brahmanic architects first raised their Hindu shrines at Ekāmra—as the śikhara was developing, one way or the other, by that time at Badami too.

In what other way could one explain the almost miraculous appearance, with no introduction, no previous history, of the Hindu temple tower of Orissa around the year 600 A.D. ? Surely, it cannot be surmised that the śikhara was invented, as it were, as soon as the Brahmanic architect turned to the making of temples, on the spur of the moment, the creation of a single genius. Elsewhere, I have tentatively suggested that the śikhara of the Paraśurāmeśvara is too good to be true, so to say, and that it might have been added by a second generation, perhaps fifty years or so later.* But even if that is so—and it is a reasonable surmise, for temples often take a hundred and more years to be completed—the great puzzle still remains : where are the predecessors of this tower ? Where are the earlier specimens, less lofty and less perfect ? Is it suggested that the śikhara was evolved in the western tracts of India alone, in the Badami-Aihole-Pattadakal region, in the 5th-6th centuries, and, as we know, it rose from hesitant beginnings to more lofty heights ? Or is it suggested that the Oriya architects continued the experiments of Mamallapuram near Madras, and yet evolved something quite different, all of a sudden, the "Orissa style śikhara", with its beehive curvature, almost fully evolved in the first few temples, in the Śatrughneśvara, the Paraśurāmeśvara and the Siṁhanātha ? All these towers are admirable, highly evolved specimens, and *it is imperative to postulate that there was a long development before these shapes were arrived at.*

I see no answer to these questions except the hypothesis that temple towers were made in the 5th and 6th centuries, before the Brahmanic architects went to work, by their Buddhist predecessors ; it was the Buddhist Mahāyāna artist who searched for a lofty elevation and who developed some sort of temple tower before his Hindu fellow-workers got to work. The little Ratnagiri temple, alas, has no upper structure, and is,

* This suggestion has been made by others too.

as has been suggested, a late addition. But that there may be many Buddhist temples hidden in the ground, is most likely. After all, no one knew a few years ago of the vast Buddhist remains now brought to light at Ratnagiri.

Unsatisfactory as this conjectural "history" is, it is the best that can be offered at the moment. Only the spade can bring a more convincing explanation of the "miracle" of the Orissan śikhara.

And I have to return here to a subject mentioned *en passant* another hint that Buddhist temple architecture preceded the Brahmanic structures of the 7th century. This is the striking fact that *pillared halls, maṇḍapas, occur only in the very first temples in Orissa.* Pillared constructions were a common feature of Buddhist buildings they occur in practically every monastery—including Ratnagiri*—and the two crucial examples that we possess of Buddhist shrines refurbished by the Hindus when they took them over, happen to give striking evidence of this. These are the temples at Narsinghnath and the Kosaleśvara.** Both provide evidence of earlier Buddhist temple construction, both have internal columniation, however much the Brahmanic occupants changed the temples in later days.

The only pillared *maṇḍapas* in Hindu temples are those of the earliest times, notably the Paraśurāmeśvara, the best preserved of all, datable to shortly after 600 A.D.

Here, then, is additional evidence that Buddhists must have had pillared *maṇḍapas* before the Hindu architects went to work. Within a hundred years or so, they gave up the columniation, and later Brahmanic temples do not have pillars anywhere in Orissa. It is true that the Kosaleśvara has no śikhara at present, though there are indications that there was once another structure adjacent to it.*** And yet the hypothesis that the śikhara was evolved by the Buddhists before the creation of the first Brahmanic temples appears to be supported by the fact that the earliest shrines had other Buddhistic architectural elements—not to speak of the many evidences that sculptural work too in the early specimens of Orissan Hindu temples owes a great deal to Buddhistic carving. The Paraśurāmeśvara and the Baitāl Deul are full of relievo work that might as well have been made by Buddhist artisans. Dr Panigrahi even discovers a Dhyāni Buddha and an Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva (both Mahāyāna Buddhist deities) on the Mukteśvara Temple at Bhubaneshwar. (Figs. 59 and 61 in his book).

* Also at Kupari, Plate XIX.

** See above, Chapter 5.

*** The foundations are clearly visible.

10

The Development of the Pyramidal Roof

AS already mentioned in the previous chapter, the development of the *śikhara,* the curvilinear spire, so typical of Orissan temple architecture, seems to be impossible to follow in the present state of our knowledge. Fresh excavations might fill this gap. Dr Panigrahi in his admirable work on Bhubaneshwar[1] correctly says "It is difficult to ascertain the shape of the earliest temples which are no longer in existence and to which some of the detached sculptures must have belonged. . . . These buildings might have represented the earlier tentative efforts which finally led to the growth of the *Śikhara* temple." As indicated above, the author of the present book posits that the first attempts at raising a higher roof might well have been made by the Buddhists, not one single temple of whom is extant, except in its foundations.

But, fortunately, there is one element of Orissan temple architecture that allows us to piece together a chronological history, based on formal evolution. Though gaps exist, this element—not observed by previous

1. *Op. cit.,* p. 51.

students so far—survives in a number of temples in various stages of evolution, and an examination will give us a useful tool in the nebulous chronology of Orissan temples.

This is the roof over the prayer-hall or *maṇḍapa,* preceding the *vimāna* or sanctum, a portion that is referred to in Oriya architecture as the *piḍhā-deul.* The word *deul* is a local derivative of the Sanskrit term *devālaya,* "abode of the god", shrine or fane. In its fully evolved form this part of the temple has a pyramidal roof, consisting of slanting stone slabs, on all four sides diminishing in size, so that the bottom slabs jut out over the walls of the shrine, like eaves, but the slabs higher up become smaller and smaller, and form a pyramid-shaped peak. Sometimes there is hardly any interval between the slabs, sometimes it is there ; and in later temples major intervals—as in music—are inserted between two or three groups of these *piḍhās,* as they are called.

Once upon a time I thought that the number of these broad slabs of stone was always uneven 5, 7, 9, 11. I have observed since that there does not seem to be an absolute rule about this, notable exceptions being the Rājarāni (twelve slabs as far as I can see) and the Konarka temple (from below six slabs, parapet with sculptures, six slabs, upper parapet with sculptures, five slabs, topmost parapet). Nevertheless, I am not quite certain that the way I have counted these slabs is correct, and it was probably the *general* rule to have uneven numbers of slabs.

In later days these pyramidal roofs were crowned by an *amalaka*—about which more will have to be said. But as late as the Mukteśvara and the Rājarāṇi the pyramidal roof of the hall of prayer was crowned not by an *amalaka* but by a vase of plenty, a *kalaśa.* This is a jar-shaped finial, probably symbolizing prosperity.

* * *

Architectural inventions are not made in a day, and roof-making has always been the most difficult part of a building. Anyone can raise four walls, but roofing the space thus created is no small matter. And so we are now in the happy position to be able to follow here the gradual invention of the pyramidal roof of the Orissan *piḍhā-deul,* almost every step of which can be seen in one monument or the other.

Anyone can see that the number of slabs increased with time. There are more *piḍhās,* to quote a few examples, on the Sun Temple of Konarka (mid-13th century) than on the Liṅgarāja of Bhubaneshwar (about 1060-1100), and there are more on the Liṅgarāja than on the Rājarāni (date about 1000 A.D.), and again less than that on the Mukteśvara (about 900 A.D. or earlier).

If, then, the number of roof slabs has been growing over the centuries, where do we find the earliest specimens ?

The earliest known structural temple in India that I know of is the one I had the good fortune of discovering at Aihole. It is a nameless little shrine, and I date it to 350 A.D. or earlier. A detailed description will be found in my book *An Introduction to Indian Architecture*[2], as well as an illustration (Plate 7). In this primitive and crude attempt to erect a structural temple, the mason used enormous, rough stones, having inherited his ideas from rock-cut shrines, and he covered his cella and porch with a vast, thick roof consisting of enormous slabs of stone joined together. Here, then, is the single roof, with hardly a slant.

But some fifty years later, in the beautiful little classical Temple No. 17 at Sanchi, every part of the temple had been refined, the pieces of stone employed are much more reasonable in size, well polished, and the roof, *still a single piḍhā,* is now slanting. This too is illustrated in my book on Indian architecture, in Plate 8. Nevertheless, in this little shrine allowance has been made for the necessary run-off of rain-water, and the resulting moulding now looks almost like a second roof slab, though it is a single slab.

By the year 450 A.D. or so, the roof had to be larger, and we encounter three *piḍhās* in the Lād Khān Temple at Aihole, the top one slightly receding and smaller, but the two bottom ones of the same size. But close by, on the Durgā Temple of Aihole (*op. cit.*, Plate 10) the number of slanting *slabs on the roof has been increased to four.* Each is smaller than the one below, so that the rain-water can run off from ledge to ledge, in a cascade.

Here, then, is a gradual multiplication of the single roofing slab, growing like a plant, by a natural process.

But if this evolution can be lucidly seen in that part of India, Orissa itself gives excellent examples of the gradual growing of the *piḍhās* in number.

The two extant temples of the earliest period (not counting the few dilapidated early specimens, of which more will be said later) are the Paraśurāmeśvara and the Baitāl Deul, both at Bhubaneshwar. Both have a *jagamohana* or prayer-hall of a quadrangular shape, now universally recognized as a sign of great antiquity and deriving from Buddhist examples ; both are covered by a roof of *two slanting slabs.* A narrow space under the upper slab allows the cutting of windows in the clerestory fashion. The Paraśurāmeśvara is illustrated here in Plate LXXXVIII, and the Baitāl Deul in Plate CII.

2. Charles Fabri, *An Introduction to Indian Architecture,* Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1963.

There are a number of indications that the much disputed date of the Baitāl Deul is earlier—perhaps only a generation or some fifty years earlier—than that of the Paraśurāmeśvara. According to Dr Pānigrahi,[3] who carefully weighs the evidence, the latter dates from the first half of the 7th century, about 610-630 A.D. But a careful study of the two *jagamohana* roofs suggests that the Baitāl Deul specimen is less skilfully manipulated, that the slope of the top roof is not as boldly done as on the Paraśurāma, and that the architect who designed the latter improved the slant of his slabs on the basis of practical experience. And practical experience counts enormously with architectural history. Were it not that there are numerous indications in the sculptural and decorative matters of the Baitāl Deul suggesting an earlier date and a much more close connexion with Buddhist tradition, on the basis of the *jagamohana* roof alone I would venture to propose a date a generation earlier than that of the Paraśurāma.

The next examples in Orissa are far from Bhubaneshwar, yet they belong to the same line of development. It can never be emphasized enough that in the whole history of India, apart from religion, no expression of the nation was as unified as art; and that artisans, *śilpins,* sculptors, architects, masons, painters, were wandering craftsmen, who would go from Bhubaneshwar, where they had finished a temple, to help with the building of another temple, a few hundred miles away.

And so the next example comes from the small place called Gandharādi, District Phulbani, near Baudh. Here some devout persons of the 7th century did not feel sure which of the two deities was more important, Shiva or Vishṇu. He might have heard, or read, the famous text of the *Ekāmra Purāṇa*[4] that says "There is no distinction between Vishṇu and Shiva. This is the everlasting Law (*dharma*), and he who follows this Law attains Salvation." And thus he caused two temples to be erected, standing close to each other, absolutely identical in every respect, one dedicated to Shiva, the other to Vishṇu. Such an unusual act had to be crowned unusually; and thus we have on one of the two shrines a phallus on the top of the spire, probably the only one in the entire country in this position, and a Vishṇu-*chakra* on the top of the other. (See Plate CVII).

Both the shrines of Gandharādi possess a quadrangular *jagamohana* of the early type, similar to those of the Baitāl and the Paraśurāma of Bhubaneshwar. There is one important difference: we have a rudimentary third slab on the top of the two lower ones.

It has always been recognized that the Twin Temples of Gandharādi belong to the same period, more or less, as the Paraśurāmeśvara of

3. *Op. cit.,* p. 27 sq. I have slightly differed from him with regard to the date.

4. Ch. V, p. 29.

Bhubaneshwar.[5] Dr Panigrahi, whose book deals with Bhubaneshwar, mentions the Gandharādi temple (*sic*), in connexion with the other early temple, the Śiśireśvara of Bhubaneshwar, which too possesses a rectangular *jagamohana,* alas, in such a bad condition that definite conclusions regarding its roof are difficult to reach. It probably belongs to the self-same generation as the Paraśurāma, though Dr Panigrahi suggests "*c.* 800".[6] I believe that to be a little late; and as to the Gandharādi temples, I suggest a date not later than 750, probably earlier.* One would like to support this date with sculptural facts. Unhappily, early in this century all the sculptures that stood in the niches of the Gandharādi temples, have been pilfered. They were seen and greatly admired by Mr Beglar in 1875-76. From the organized pattern that remains it is patently obvious that the sculptor-architect had learnt many lessons since he had created the disorganized pattern on the Paraśurāma. Nevertheless, the structural evidence does not indicate a date more than a hundred years—or three generations—later than that of the Paraśurāmeśvara to which the twin temples bear much resemblance. It is also noteworthy that the *śikharas* of the Gandharādi shrines are small, squat and undeveloped.

We thus come to the conclusion that *the two-tiered clerestory roof of the Orissan temple of around 630 had acquired a third slab by the end of the 7th century;* and we possess a splendid example of this development in the charming and early temple on the island in the Mahanadi river, the Siṁhanātha temple, District Baramba, not far from Athgarh. (See Plate XCVI). The beautifully situated temple has the most clear indication that it is slightly later than the Paraśurāmeśvara, though, in my opinion, the difference is hardly likely to be more than one generation. As will be seen in a later chapter where I shall deal with temple after temple, the relievo carving is primitive in the extreme; and as the place is so near to the Ekāmra country (about 80 km from Cuttack by motor road), it would be erroneous to suppose that we have to do here with what may be called a "provincial" artist. If the general organization of the surface is better than on the Paraśurāmeśvara, the sculptures belong to the same early mannerist school (Plates XCVIII, C and CI).

As far as the *piḍhās* are concerned, they obviously indicate a straight line of development, very much like those seen in Aihole. Multiplication and elaboration are so much a basic law of artistic development from the archaic that it is not unreasonable to take it for granted that this natural, logical, reasonable evolution had been worked, independently, or almost

5. R. D. Banerji, *Antiquities of Baudh State,* J. B. & Ors., XV, pp. 64ff.

6. *Op. cit.,* p. 58.

* For a more accurate dating, see next chapter.

independently, in two areas of India so far apart as Orissa and Maharashtra, both anxious to develop a lofty and imposing structural temple.

At this point the local evidence runs dry, and we have to refer once again to the gradual growth of the number of *piḍhā* stones in Aihole. There as many as five can be seen, before the sudden development of the pyramidal roof ; for what we next meet are eleven and more slanting stones. Nevertheless, the evolution, in Western India as in Orissa, is clearly proved from the two to the three, four, five and more slabbed roof ; and this gradual evolution allows us to date the earlier temples, at least relatively. That eleven slabs was the favoured number around 900 to 1100 is well evidenced. The Liṅgarāja has fifteen on the *jagamohana,* and the Konarka Sun Temple, all counted, seventeen.

Purely on the basis of the *piḍhā deul,* at the present moment disregarding all other evidence, to be examined in the subsequent chapters, we come to the following relative chronology

I. Baitāl Deul, perhaps 600 A.D. or a little earlier.
II. Paraśurāmeśvara, about a generation later, about 610-630 A.D.[7]
III. Śiśireśvara, either just before II or contemporary ?
IV. Gandharādi, Twin Temples, probably before 750 A.D.
V. Siṁhanātha of Baramba, contemporary with IV.

And if some of this appears conjectural, further examination of architectural and structural elements will help us in coming to more final conclusions.

An important detail may be emphasized here. It is that no *jagamohana* is crowned in the early centuries by an *amalaka* stone. The point of departure appears to be the Liṅgarāja, for the Rājarāni, datable to around 1000 A.D., still has the jar (*kalaśa*) on top. About 50 years later the *amalaka* replaces the *kalaśa* finial on the *maṇḍapa's* top.

7. Dr Panigrahi inclines later in his book to the date *c.* 650 A.D. See *op. cit.*, p. 69. His date for the Śatrughneśvara is *c.* 575 A.D.

11

The Earliest Temples

DR K. C. PANIGRAHI in his fine work, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneshwar,* struggles heroically to establish some order, some chronology in the muddled evidence for the early centuries of temple architecture ; with splendid reasoning he advances evidence for his datings, and most of it will surely be the final word on the subject—though new evidence may, of course, alter these dates here and there. It is interesting to observe that he too, like the present writer, refuses to be swept away by epigraphic evidence. "A temple as a living monument", he says on p. 32, "is, however, apt to receive inscriptions in different periods of its existence, and inscriptions with no reference to its construction may at best serve as archaeological guides to the history of the shrine" He quotes as a typical example an 8th century inscription (with a rather unintelligible text, perhaps a mystic formula) on the Baitāl Deul that proves nothing more than that the temple was in existence when this inscription was incized it may have been in existence, as far as we are concerned, for hundreds of years before someone wrote this on a stone near the door jamb. I have given similar examples of misleading inscriptions in my dating of the Ajanta Caves.*

* *MARG,* Vol. IX, no. 1.

Thus Dr Panigrahi, after examining most cogently the few inscribed temples of the early period, returns to them and their "cognate" temples in a later chapter, and here he is forced to adopt *stylistical* considerations in attempting to come to a basic chronology a method most unwisely despised by archaeologists of a certain stamp, who pin their faith on epigraphy and palaeography in an almost childish manner. Here I am in full agreement, in respect of methodology, with Dr Panigrahi, for I am convinced that stylistical studies will lead us much farther than purely archaeological methods. Few archaeologists can avoid some study at least of style, but this is the specific method of the art historian, and not well understood by many first-rate archaeologists whose excellent training does not include art history.

This little excursion was necessary because the present book is *not* an archaeological history but an art history; and hence the author feels fully justified in skipping boldly over the remains that have little to contribute to art history, however interesting they may be archaeologically.

Now a good number of the earliest temples—earliest by all available evidence—is no more than ruined heaps of stones, with here and there a point of interest. Architecturally some of these must be mentioned, for their erstwhile form can still be detected; now and then a small sculptural fragment reveals enough to allow reliable dating—and delights the eye. Some fragments by much earlier sculptors have been preserved by being inserted into much, much later shrines, and I have already mentioned one example, the image in the Sakhigopal temple. Dr Panigrahi has a splendid example in his Fig. 134, a Hara-Pārvatī slab of exquisite workmanship, a work of great aesthetic value, patently not later than just post-Gupta, which is now housed in a *modern* shrine in the Bharati Math. There are numerous others, and I have enumerated some myself earlier in this book.

One or two conclusions are possible about these ruined shrines of the earliest times.

Hindu temple building does not get into its stride anywhere in India before the 5th century A.D., earlier specimens being extremely few. Buddhism was flourishing in large areas of the country, and though it became more and more "Brahmanized" by the adoption of icon worship, ritual and a steadily growing pantheon, it was only in the 6th century, and not before, that important Brahmanic shrines start coming up. The renowned *Daśavatāra Temple*, a Vishṇu shrine, at Deogarh, dates from the very end of the 6th century, and the famous shrines at Badami, Pattadakal and Aihole multiply rapidly in the 7th century rather than the 6th.

It stands to reason, therefore, to expect a parallel development in Orissa. Buddhism has not only widely spread but it is flourishing also in the 6th and 7th centuries—indeed, it flourishes in Orissa for *six hundred years more*—

but at the end of the 6th century Hindu shrines begin to dot the landscape, and some of the small ruined piles of stones belong to this earliest period, let us say the period between 575 and 625 A.D., a crucial fifty years under the sovereignty of the devout worshippers of Shiva, the Śailodbhava kings.

What were these earliest temples like ?

How do we come to the sudden beauty, the surprising completeness of the Paraśurāmeśvara and the Baitāl Deul ? Both these shrines must be dated to the generation around 600 to 630 A.D., and both are far too accomplished to be understood without at least a generation of builders that must have preceded these gems of architecture.

The more one looks at these various shrines, and their cousins in the rest of India at this period, the more one comes to the conclusion that the sudden blossoming forth of the Orissan temple style is the result of *two almost entirely separate lines of development,* a kind of mating of two strains, resulting in the 7th century style of temple.

These two elements grew in various parts of India, and it was mainly (if not exclusively) in Orissa that the two components found a happy union.

I refer to the development of *the house-like shrine,* the *maṇḍapa* on the one hand, and *the tower-like elevation,* the *Śikhara,* on the other.

As early as the 4th century we have had Buddhist shrines, low, like flat-roofed houses, in which an icon lived, without any tower-like elevation. Such was the lovely little temple No. 17 at Sanchi, about 350 A.D., and a number of others. Such were a few of the Mamallapuram rock-cut "rathas", true huts and houses, with no more than the smallest roofs, slowly rising towards 500 A.D. But by the time we reach the last Mamallapuram shrine, the "Dharmarāja Ratha", which I date to around 500 A.D., what we have is no more a flat-roofed little hut, it is a small tower, a *śikhara* over a sanctum, though not yet lofty.

Admittedly, the two elements did not grow entirely separately. But *none of these early shrines consisted of two adjoining parts,* one a low-roofed hall of entrance, and then, attached to it, a sacred fane over which a tower rose, however small. These early attempts at a structural temple were either flat-roofed or turned into the tower-crowned sanctum itself.

That is, I suggest, the reason why we find early ruined shrines in Orissa too in which the entire shrine was just a small *śikhara,* with no *maṇḍapa* preceding it. That is why the Ratnagiri temple was obviously nothing but one cell, crowned presumably by some kind of tower—but not of two elements joined together. As late as the 8th century or so, three independent *śikharas* were erected, without any *maṇḍapa,* at Baudh (Plate CVI), lovely, elegantly shaped, well evolved tower-temples, standing alone at the three points of a triangle, and no trace of any other shrine.

In many ways similar in essential conception were the three lovely shrines called Mūvar Kovil at Kodumbalur, Madras (see my *Introduction to Indian Architecture,* Plate 16), where *the shrine is the tower, and the tower is the shrine.*

Such are the earliest extant ruins in Orissa too. The Śatrughneśvara, which Dr Panigrahi, most reasonably, dates to about 575 A.D., is a single, low tower and nothing else. The Lakshmaṇeśvara was nothing but a small *śikhara,* into which you entered through a door, to offer your worship to the icon. And such is the slightly better preserved Bhārateśvara Temple. The Lakshmaṇeśvara entrance, with a lintel over the door, is seen in Plate LXXXVI and it can be felt that the elephant frieze has much in common with Buddhist relievo carvings ; this is also characterized by a division of the long ribbon into compartments by the insertion of a tree as a divider—a method known to Buddhist art as early as the 2nd century B.C. wall-paintings at Ajanta. Two doorkeepers, *dvārapālas,* obviously in a mannerist style, stand at the foot of the jambs—no sign yet of the Hindu goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā. *Very low* cut decorative motifs are carved into the jambs, with strong Gupta elements the floral ornament is superb, and the organization of the space testifies to a still well-remembered classic feeling for the noble distribution of masses nothing is overcrowded, the entire entrance is just mannerist, undoubtedly a 6th century work. So are the postures ; and a comparison with the Baitāl Deul will show that both the low cut relievo ornaments and the two little figures are earlier and more skilful on the Lakshmaṇeśvara than on the Baitāl Deul. (Cp. Plates CIII-CV).

Equally simple, nothing but a temple tower, with no *maṇḍapa,* must have been the Bhārateśvara, whose entrance is shown in Plate LXXXVII. Instantly obvious is the fact that everything is further developed the jambs have *not two but three* ribbons of ornament, the overdoor decoration is far more involved, there are further friezes added on top of the sculptured lintel, the entire scheme is richer, more elaborate than at the Lakshmaṇeśvara. The similarity of many of the ornamental ribbons and pilasters to those on the Baitāl Deul is striking, and there are several features of extreme interest.

Let us take the lintel first. At the two ends of the lintel we have representations of what must be considered essentially fair samples of shrines of the times (just before 600 A.D.). These are low, spire-crowned single cells, with an *amalaka* on top, a *chaitya*-window over the lintel, and one has a *liṅga* in the shrine, whilst the one on the right has what one may take to be an icon. This is no small matter, for these low-*śikhara* temples are *the best evidence so far in our hands of the earliest development of Orissan temples* hardly more than houses for the icons, they show a two-

tiered roof rising over the sanctum, with an *amalaka* on the top. Both have an open entrance, exactly as the three temples of the Śatrughneśvara-Lakshmaṇeśvara-Bhārateśvara group we are discussing now.

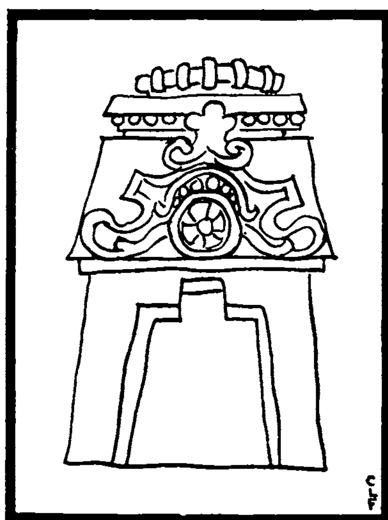


Fig. 2

I give here a text illustration (fig. 2) to show what the earliest temples must have looked like. It is a fairly accurate sketch, made not from the carving *in situ* but from the photograph I took. I have little doubt that this important piece of evidence does show how the original *śikhara* grew over a simple cell, and that the genius of the Orissan architect conceived the admirable idea, later on, to make a separate *śikhara* (or *vimāna*) for the sanctum with a closely attached entrance-hall, a *maṇḍapa* in front of it. That *maṇḍapa* was a flat-roofed, pillared house, *on the Buddhist model*, first, and it was only afterwards that it was turned to the characteristic Oriya temple with the pyramidal roof, the *piḍhā-deul*.

Before we leave the Bhārateśvara Temple, we should observe the highly complicated relievo lintel, far more Brahmanic than the elephant-frieze over the doorway of the Lakshmaṇeśvara, so Buddhist in feeling. Here we have in the centre Shiva and Pārvatī with attendants, the vehicles, a bull and a lion below, two *sundarīs* or dancing girls on the two sides (one is looking into a mirror), and what appears to be donor-worshippers in the lower register. We have here, so to say, suddenly arrived in the very middle of Shivaitic imagery, whereas, note carefully, *nothing whatever on*

the Lakshmaṇeśvara discloses its Shaiva nature as far as the contents and the iconography of the sculptured work are concerned, it could be, it might be, a Buddhist shrine. Only the *liṅga* inside tells its tale.

To say that these two temples are by different hands is rather trite and obvious ; what matters is that the concept of the architect has not changed, it is only the sculptured work that shows a difference to a great degree. These two shrines were built by the same generation. If the Lakshmaṇeśvara was erected, as it most probably was, about 575 A.D., I suggest that the Bhārateśvara must be some 25-30 years later, and its approximate date cannot be far from 600 A.D. As will be seen presently, this date fits handsomely with that of the Baitāl Deul. It also fits excellently well with Dr Panigrahi's comparisons with the sculptures on the Paraśurāmeśvara to which several other panels, not shown in this book (see, *e.g.* Dr Panigrahi's Figs. 41, 42 and 44) on the Bhārateśvara bear remarkable similarity. I would not go as far as Dr Panigrahi who suggests that the artist may be the same in the two cases, but I wholeheartedly accept his contention that the two artists were very close to each other. As will be seen, my date for the Paraśurāmeśvara fully bears out this hypothesis.

It is necessary to mention here that there seems to be some confusion about the present-day popular names of these three shrines of the Śatrughneśvara group. Mrs Debala Mitra in her guide book *Bhubaneshwar* avoids the individual names, and refers to "the southernmost temple". I received entirely false information locally myself, but in this book I follow Dr Panigrahi's nomenclature.

From what has been said above it follows that the earliest temple form in Orissa was a single cell, with a direct entrance, not always facing either east or west, rising to a small to moderate sized beehive tower, a *śikhara,* or spire on top ; the example given in the drawing in text Fig. 1 must have been the earliest prototype, after which little has changed except that the spire has gradually risen higher. This type of single-cell *śikhara* shrine precedes the next group of temples, such as the Paraśurāmeśvara, of which Mrs Mitra incorrectly says that it is "the best preserved specimen of the early group of temples, embodying nearly all the characteristics peculiar thereto" (*sic*, p. 23). *The fact here clearly established is that the earliest temple possessed no jagamohana or maṇḍapa at all, and that the Paraśurāma and its contemporaries mark a decisive second step in the development of Orissan temple architecture, viz.* the brilliant concept of adding a flat-roofed "entrance shrine" or "house of prayer" to the *vimāna.*

As late as the 8th century three strange temples were erected at Bauḍh, standing at the three corners of a triangle, at a short distance from each other, each a lone *śikhara* or single tower of moderate height, with no other entrance but a door, no porch, no prayer-hall. (Plate CVI).

12

The Second Phase of the Orissan Temple

WE are now beginning to see much more clearly that the early temple type, characterized by the Paraśurāmeśvara and about a dozen other shrines, is, in fact, of the second phase. The earliest shrines consisted of single cells with a plain entrance on a side, and a small tower on top, as described in the previous chapter. There was no porch.

It is difficult to say how some Oriya genius came to the splendid idea of making a kind of ante-chamber to the sanctum; but the fact is that soon after 600 A.D. these two-piece temples rise rather rapidly. Personally, I am inclined to surmise that the Mārkaṇḍeyeśvara (sw corner of the Bindu-Sarovara in Bhubaneshwar) might have been the first such temple consisting of two parts; but as the *jagamohana* is totally modern, it is difficult to be positive about it.* It has fascinating remnants of old sculpture an inebriate man, old *kumbha* (pot) ornaments, addorsed Persian lions (a typically Buddhist motif, going back to Aśokan times), and a few others.

* Dr. Panigrahi believes it was the Satrughneśvara as he finds traces of a plinth of a jagamohana next to the present śikhara shrine. Cp. 148 *loc. cit.*

The two most important and well-preserved shrines in Bhubaneshwar are the Baitāl Deul and the Paraśurāmeśvara; less well preserved is the Svarṇajāleśvara, a few paces from the Paraśurāma, the Paśchimeśvara (near the Bindu-Sarovara again, as is the unfinished but contemporary Mohinī); then the excellently preserved Siṁhanātha Temple on an island in the Mahanadi; and further inland, the twin temples at Gandharādi, in the Baudh country, dedicated to Nīlamādhava and Siddheśvara (Vishṇu and Shiva); also a few others, less notable.

Let me begin with the *Paraśurāmeśvara,* as the most splendid specimen of this two-piece period, a flat-roofed hall of prayer preceding the tower-crowned sanctum.

The name is spelt in an inscription over the south entrance as *Pārāśeś-vara,* which is interpreted as probably *Parāśareśvara, i.e.* a liṅga enshrined in the name of Parāśara, one of the Pāśupata teachers. In the following pages we shall refer to this temple as Paraśu°.

Even a cursory examination will prove that *the two parts, the tower and the hall, have not been built together.* The *jagamohana,* the flat-roofed hall, is noway jointed with the *vimāna,* not bonded, but rather a patched-up addition; and even if the two parts were built more or less at the same time, they were not built as a *single* plan. Once or twice the suggestion had been made that the *śikhara* is slightly later; there is some inner evidence that its ornamentation and planning are so *much more organized* and carefully thought out that I do not exclude the possibility that a pillared, flat-roofed hall had been built first and a tower was added to it later —perhaps within a few years.

The jagamohana is teeming with Buddhist motifs, the vimāna is much less so; both thematically and stylistically there is a marked difference. Chaitya-windows abound with the jagamohana; in fact, the rather bewildered artist who made this ill-organized, untidy sculptured wall appears to have had recourse to the chaitya-window, every time he was at a loss for a subject: but on the śikhara there is no sign of this *cliché* being used when the artist ran out of ideas. On the contrary, the design on the vimāna is handsomely arranged, well organized, consciously symmetrical, full of elegant variety—qualities almost totally lacking in the jagamohana with its disorderly relievos. Moreover, there seems to be a system in this madness, for the rich front that the śikhara holds before the spectator, is almost entirely on the same plan, basically similar though different in minor detail, as the same side of the Bhārateśvara (slightly earlier), the Siṁhanātha (slightly later), the twin temples of Gandharādi (contemporary) and the Svarṇajāleśvara (contemporary) whereas the relievo carving on the flanks of the Paraśu° jagamohana *bears hardly any resemblance to any of the other, better organized sculptured walls.*

The detail from one of the sides of the jagamohana of the Paraśu° illustrated in Plate LXXXIX is characteristic. Having run out of ideas, the sculptor piles up chaitya-window over chaitya-window, of which this small fragment shows no less than eight. The three in the centre, one above the other, are not even aligned with the three to the left; and sometimes chessboard pattern perforations are made on one side of a horse-shoe arch and not on the other. The poverty of ideas that makes the artist build up so many images—sometimes an animal, sometimes a god, sometimes a loving couple—by surrounding this subject with an involved design of a chaitya-window, repeating this large framework again and again, shows clearly enough that we are at the very beginning of jagamohana development. And, I believe, the explanation lies in the rather plausible surmise that the sculptors, brought over from contemporary Buddhist work, were quite capable of carving individual images that went into niches in the brick walls of Buddhist monasteries, but were not yet able to carry out a complete, overall, well-organized sculptured *wall made entirely of stone and intended to be covered with relievos,* from end to end. It is interesting to observe the small pilaster to the bottom left of the large chessboard pattern perforated window it is a lovely piece of classical Buddhist work, extremely moderate in decoration; but would it not have been logical to carry it up along the whole length of the window, to frame it, as it were, on both sides by pilasters, and create some kind of lintel over it? Two of the chaitya-windows on the left side end abruptly near the window frame. How much better this framing and defining of areas is done on the facade of the śikhara of the Paraśu° will be seen in Plate XCIII.

Mano Mohan Ganguly in his *Orissa and her Remains,* makes the surprising statement that there are no erotic sculptures on the Paraśu°. Their number is, to be sure, fewer than in the later temples, say the Sun Temple of Konarka, but there are plenty of them, from loving couples who dally with each other, to *sundarīs* (belles) who show their undraped charms, and to men and women in the act of copulation. The two plates that illustrate a few of these are of exceptional interest from more points of view than one (Plates XC and XCI).

This *mithuna* or loving couple is next to the entrance, as mithunas ought to be. (Plate XC). Charming and attractive as this small panel is, showing a shy girl and the forward swain, there is a good deal of clumsiness in the detail. The heads are far too large for the bodies, the man's legs are rather awkwardly drawn, and the right foot is surprisingly bad. On the other hand, the panel can be dated with considerable accuracy, as the man, quite obviously, is wearing what I have called the "wig-like hair-dress" in my *History of Indian Dress.* Curled, as it were, in horizontal, parallel

waves, this hair-dress looks uncommonly like a judge's wig. This style of "curled" wig comes into fashion at the end of the 6th century, and I do not know of a single specimen that is later than 700 A.D.—in fact by 700 it was totally out of fashion. (See *History of Indian Dress*, p. 48.)

Exactly the same wig-like head-dress is worn by the tenderly embracing couple shown in Plate XCI, in the lower panel. Both are entirely naked, locked in the act of love, and the drawing is better than in the previous plate. Above this scene is a sinuously bending girl; even in its present deteriorated state it can be seen that this is by far the best modelled of the three panels under discussion, the breasts, the soft flesh round the navel and the arms all testifying to mannerist art and experienced skill. She is shown as untying the waist string of her one and only garment and allowing it to fall and show her *pudenda*. The attitude is coquettish, without being coarse.

Also near the same door is a fascinating door-keeper (*dvārapāla*, illustrated in Plate XCII). This is a powerfully drawn, masculine figure, holding out, forbiddingly, a sword that appears to be a two-edged broad sword; he too has the wig-type hair-dress fashionable between 575 and 675 A.D.; and what lends extraordinary interest to this panel, besides the accurate date of the head-wear, is that he carries in his chain-belt a dirk that is the clearest copy of a Javanese *Kris* as far as I know the only representation of this type of arm anywhere in India.

Considering the intimate connexion of Orissa with the colonisation of Java and Suvarṇa-dvīpa, this representation of a Javanese *Kris* must be of utmost interest.

Before turning to the śikhara portion, we must dwell briefly on the several unusual features of the jagamohana structure. It is a long, quadrangular building, far better illuminated than any other temple in Orissa. Light comes amply from the vent-holes of the clerestory windows cut between the top and the lower, sloping roof slabs; perforated windows, one with a lively representation of masked male dancers, allow plenty of light to fall into the hall, and so do the two wide open doors—a most unusual member of an Orissan temple. Pillars support the roof within the jagamohana, a typically Buddhist notion, later given up when the jagamohana becomes square and the roof is constructed on the principle of reduction.

Here as in so many other details the profound influence of contemporary Buddhist architecture and sculpture is patently seen. We are at the very beginning of Brahmanic temple architecture, which has been developing only for some fifty to seventy years.

This brings us to a stylistic consideration of the sculpture on the jagamohana.

The unity of India from an artistic point of view has been so often demonstrated that one hesitates to make a breach in this fortress. For there can be no doubt at all that in all periods of art history there has been an astonishing parallelism in this country, so that when the most archaic figures were made in Mathura, the Amaravati school in Andhra produced similar primitive work ; nor can be there any doubt that the Gupta period (taken in its strict sense, from 320 to 500 A.D.) produced all over the country the same classical features, with no apparent "lag" between North and South ; mannerism bursts out everywhere in this huge sub-continent in the sixth century, and the baroque is ushered in by the 8th, to become *flamboyant* everywhere, from East to West, in the 9th to 13th centuries from Mysore to Konarka.

The universal spread of stylistic attitudes shows itself equally in literature, for by the 8th century the same exuberance in Sanskrit style prevails everywhere as in sculpture, architecture and painting ; the period of eroticism is not restricted to sculpture, but is found equally in the declining dramatic literature of exactly the same age.

But whilst we insist that style in India is uniform in all periods, *we must be careful not to expect the same quality in every piece of sculpture.* There have been good artists and bad artists, geniuses and hackworkers at all times, and in every country of the world. There has often been some metropolitan centre in which the finest artists found splendid patrons, and small, out-of-the-way holes deep down in the country, where small rajas and petty rulers contented themselves with provincial sculptors of less genius and less ability. Undoubtedly, artisans and *śilpins* of all kinds wandered about, and flocked readily to places where great building activity took place ; and a family of admirable stone-carvers who had worked for three or four years in, say, Central India, on a monument, would go to Utkala or Andhra, once it had completed that temple, if it had heard that a king there was building a new shrine and needed more artists. We have written evidence that marriage gifts included an artist or two in the retinue of a princess and this and the great and important fact of *pilgrimage* explains how the artist in one state got information about a munificent ruler in another.

And yet, even so, quality would vary ; and at one and the same time the relievo work in one town would not be quite as good as similar work done in a neighbouring area by greater artists. The point does not have to be laboured too much. It is obvious at once that not every Spanish painter in the period of El Greco was as good as he was, nor were all the painters in the Low Countries Rembrandts whilst he was alive. Some were no more than hack-painters.

Now on the jagamohana of the Paraśu° the relievo work tells a most

curious tale. Purely stylistically speaking the work is mannerist ; it shows those small departures from the classical ideal that characterize the early work of the mannerist school, those small artificialities, those turns of the head, those contrived locks of hair, those bending limbs that the classical artist would have shunned ; but in all these matters there is a quality of clumsiness, a lack of mannerist elegance and of consummate mastery. I have already pointed out that heads are too large, feet are monstrously badly drawn on occasion (Plate XC) ; these are not matters of style, but of individual ability. The sculptor who made them was a poor artist, a child of his age, *ergo* working in the style of his age; but he was no master.

Not more than some 60 km away, whilst he was struggling with this ill-organized wall, a contemporary colleague of his was creating superb pieces of sculpture at Ratnagiri, supported by the Buddhist community. The sculptor of the Paraśu° belonged to the same world, trying to do the same type of work, in the same manner ; he was just not good enough to emulate his Buddhist colleague on this early Hindu temple, one of the first experiments in stone carved temple walls for a Hindu shrine.

It cannot be emphasized enough that there exists this basic difference between Buddhist and Hindu carving that the concept of a Buddhist monastery is a plain brick wall, whilst the Hindu temple cannot be conceived as a plain wall of bricks, let alone of stone.* It is true that the plain brick wall of the earlier Buddhist monasteries becomes more and more ornate in later, iconolatric times ; but the tradition of the plain wall changes only slowly by first displaying *images in recesses or niches,* and then, in later days, by increasing the ornamentation by the application of plaster (*e.g.* Nalanda or Rajagriha) or by a stone revetment (*e.g.* Ratnagiri, cp. Plate XXX)—a development that is patently under Brahmanic influence, certainly not Buddhist in origin. These highly ornate stone revetments are, as far as I can recollect, unknown before the 8th century A.D. ; and the very fact that underneath this "new coat" (the literal meaning of the word 'revetment') there is the old brick wall, shows that the Buddhist artist, by inclination, by tradition, by his aniconic past, looked upon stone carvings as only an *additional* method of enriching his edifice : *not as the basic fabric,* the entire temple made of stone, as in the case of the Hindu temple. To build an entire structure of stone, as the Paraśu° is, and *after having built it, carve the whole surface* with sculptured ornament and figure work, from end to end, was a task beyond the ability of the new Brahmanic artist.

* This holds as a general rule, notwithstanding certain empty spaces, as on the jagamohana of the Rājarāni.

I visualize therefore two possibilities ; either the sculptor was one of the lesser Buddhist sculptors, not much honoured in his profession by the Buddhists, who turned Brahmanic artist partly perhaps from need and partly from conviction ; or, the sculptor who did the walls of this jagamohana of the Paraśu° was altogether a novice, who took his models and his stylistc fashions from neighbouring Buddhist monasteries. His *style* is, in basic essentials, identical with the style of his period, the early half of the 7th century ; his skill is far inferior to that of contemporary masters at Ratnagiri. He is also greatly inferior to the Hindu master at Deogarh, whose younger contemporary he might have been ; and if there are "archaic" elements in his work, they are false archaic, for his period is the post-classic mannerist style which he imitates with moderate success.

This judgment is not harsh, and as far as this author is concerned, it is an accurate assessment, based on long hours of study of the sculptures *in situ.*

A far better artist was at work on the facade of the vimāna or the śikhara. Organically composed, sensibly distributed, emphasizing tectonic divisions, the decoration shows splendid ability, even if the figure, the human and divine personages, are not carved with more sensibility than on the jagamohana. The god Kārttikeya (Plate XCIII) is a fine piece of carving in some respects, though deficient in elegance, say, in the hands and feet,* nor is the peacock, his vehicle, at all well drawn. Still it is a better and more impressive piece of figure modelling than the many other human and divine personages on the lintel or in the small compartments surrounding the central divinity of Kārttikeya. Large heads, clumsily drawn legs alternate with charming attitudes of the mannerist style ; on the proper left of the god, level with his breast, a pair of Gandharvas or Vidyādharas are shown flying through the air, in the best tradition of similar Buddhist figures ; on the other hand, the two figures of *Śālabhañjikās* (girls breaking with a graceful gesture a branch of a tree) are, as it were, poor recollections of some delightful masterpieces far better in quality than these. There are few chaitya-windows, and those excellently well placed. Pilasters and borders are splendidly employed ; the pilaster seen in the right top corner of Plate XCIII is a lovely example of Buddhist inheritance, in every way outstandingly done, the shaft being occupied by a belle, between a vase base and a vase capital characteristically mannerist work, *and* of commendable quality.

This book is not about iconography, and no attempt will be made to enumerate or identify all or many of the sculptural representations on the temples. In the case of the facade of the Paraśu° one or two matters

* The legs are strangely fat, as in some Ratnagiri work.

are noteworthy ; the strongly Buddhistic-looking Lakulīśa image seen in the main chaitya-window (it has often been mistaken for an earth-touching Buddha, preaching or not, from which it differs only by the presence of a staff or rod), and an even more Buddha-looking image, seated on a double lotus, a little higher up, between a pair of addorsed lions one more allusion to the Buddhist origin of the sculptor who found it difficult to switch over easily to Shaiva subjects, such as the Dancing Shiva or the Marriage of Shiva and Pārvatī, though these, too, occur.

This search for themes, for subjects to carve and cover the surface, has been observed before, *e.g.* by Mano Mohan Ganguly, and by Mrs Debala Mitra, who writes of the "remarkable catholicity, a host of deities of the Brahmanical pantheon" on the jagamohana Shiva, Sūrya, dancing Ardhanārīśvara, Shiva and Pārvatī, Hari-Hara, Yama, Varuṇa, Gaṅgā, Yamunā, the Seven Mothers, Lakulīśa, Vīrabhadra, Gaṇeśa (with human face but the trunk of an elephant !) etc.

At this point and in this connexion, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that the problem of how to cover so large a surface with sculpture and ornament is solved very differently by the time we reach the Mukteśvara or the Rājarāni *the number of sacred subjects is steadily diminishing,* and as the centuries march ahead, more and more space is given to those belles, those *sundarīs,* those "idling girls" (*alasa-kanyās*) in seductive poses that embellish the highly baroque walls, besides a growing number of scenes of love-making.

The so-called *pārśva-devatās,* "lateral deities", *i.e.* subsidiary divinities shown on the sides of the temple (not inside), hardly come into play at the beginning of Orissan temple architecture; they are much more in evidence in so late a shrine as the Liṅgarāja of Bhubaneshwar (datable to 1050-1100 A.D.) than in the Paraśu° and its contemporaries.

M. M. Ganguly states quite bluntly that the Paraśu° was built before the renowned textbooks on the arts and crafts, the *śilpa-śāstras,* were composed, and that it does not correspond at all to the descriptions given in the books. *That, for sure, applies to all temples in Orissa;* and anyone carefully studying the temples will sooner or later consider the textbooks of these pundits as near-worthless, especially at the start of the development of the temple in Kalinga. To mention one of many discrepancies there are eight Planets on the jagamohana, whereas in later days there are always nine. The transition from Buddhist concepts is typified by a Shiva-head appearing in a chaitya-window, an anomaly unknown later. Or, another example, the doorway is not framed by decorative borders, though the texts demand it (*gelbāi, barājhangi,* etc. motifs), entirely missing in the Paraśurāmeśvara. Other unusual features are that the Paraśu° has two doors, one on the south side, and no less than four windows, one on the

north, one on the south side and two in the west wall unprecedented departure from what is considered customary or regular.

To sum up, the Paraśurāmeśvara temple is a splendid surviving example of the early struggle to find a suitable form for the new-fangled concept of a two-piece temple a kind of pillared entrance hall with a flat roof, leading on to a much more lofty, tower-crowned sanctum. Unorthodox, for there did not exist orthodoxy at that time, structurally and from the point of view of sculptural decoration, the Paraśurāmeśvara is a remarkable achievement ; and if the representation of the human figure is not as admirable as in contemporary Buddhist art, it is a brave attempt by a beginner to express himself in the fashion of his days, and to adapt the style of his times to Brahmanic subjects hitherto hardly attempted. This style was the mannerist style of the first half of the 7th century, and the Master of the Paraśurāmeśvara was the most notable exponent, as far as we know, of this adaptation to novel subjects.

* * *

A few paces away from the Paraśurāmeśvara is the ruined temple of *Svarṇajāleśvara,* a temple that must have been as attractive and as early as the Paraśurāmeśvara. Its jagamohana lies in ruins around, but was, obviously, a similarly flat-roofed shrine ; but what the sculptural decoration on the outer walls was, is impossible to tell now. Of the few sculptures now in the Bhubaneshwar Orissa State Museum from the Svarṇajāleśvara one frieze-like slab tells the tale of Krishṇa defeating the monstrous snake Kāliya—an unusual subject at this time—shockingly repaired with plaster of paris. The śikhara stands, but unless the Orissa Archaeological Department does some kind of repairs, not for long. The charming little niche shown in Plate XCV is eloquent of the period to which it belongs (early decades of the 7th century), of the great skill of the stone-carver, as well as of profound Buddhistic influence. The decorative elements are excellent, carved in very shallow relievo, but the two guardian girls (*dvārapālīs*) are again less well done, and their weapons are ludicrously short. The addorsed lions over the right-hand girl guard have an ancestry going back to Aśoka's days.

* * *

Far more profitable from the point of view of art history is to leave Bhubaneshwar for a while, and to travel by boat, *via* Baramba, to cross the Mahanadi and visit the miniature island of *Siṁhanātha* a hallowed as well as a delightful islet, shaded by beautiful trees, some of which may be

as old as the temple. Once a year a fair takes place here combined with worship; otherwise the temple is rarely visited, and, as far as I know, hardly mentioned in any book on Orissa. Most authors stay at Bhubaneshwar.

Yet the Siṁhanātha temple is almost as old as the Paraśurāmeśvara of Bhubaneshwar, and pretty well preserved. Whilst the Paraśurāmeśvara is no more a place of worship, the Siṁhanātha has been kept up because divine service has been continuing there all these centuries, and the local priests live nearby, far too nearby in fact, in ugly quarters closely adjoining the old shrine.

The Siṁhanātha is also a two-piece temple, with a long, flat-roofed prayer-hall, well lighted, preceding the vimāna or śikhara, the Sanctum; and here too it appears that the śikhara was either built a few years later or that it was not organically planned, for *there are no joints* between the two parts of the Siṁhanātha either.

This appears to be so general a rule that no further reference will be necessary. Readers may be reminded of the fact that many a church in Europe was built first without a spire, the bell being often hung in a wooden contraption, until, in later days, money was forthcoming to add a tower.

In Chapter 10 I already explained that the Siṁhanātha temple belongs to the same period as the Paraśurāmeśvara, from which it may be separated by a generation or so. The number of *piḍhās,* or roof slabs, has increased to three on the jagamohana or prayer-hall, but in other respects the similarity is striking. The śikhara is rather less lofty, the hall is perhaps even better lighted with plenty of sunlight falling in, and, what is noteworthy, the sculptural ornamentation seems to be better organized than on the jagamohana of the Paraśurāmeśvara. The individual sculptures, notably the human figures, are not better; indeed, if anything they are less ably drawn, showing a strong "false archaic" touch. But there is a running design, an impressively organized frieze, just under the lowermost roof slab, that goes round on all sides and is, to all appearances, a mighty attempt to show the Mahābhārata war in an abbreviated, *saṁkshipta* form, full of dashing, galloping horses, warriors attacking each other, a splendid piece of work, even though many of the horses are in the same posture. Equally impressive, and far better than the entrance to the Paraśurāmeśvara, is the main doorway, with admirably carved floral borders, a Gaja-Lakshmī (the goddess with two elephants trumpeting water over her) crowning the lintel. Some impression of both the equine battle-frieze and of the handsomely ornate doorway may be gained from Plate XCIX. The entire temple is fairly well seen in Plate XCVI, with the two parts obviously separately conceived, the three-tier roofed prayer-hall and the rather squat spire. The lateral view of the jagamohana given in Plate

XCVI will instantly convince anyone that this side is far better organized than the untidy conglomeration of carvings on the Paraśurāmeśvara, with a high sense of division into compartments, large and small, elegant and strongly Buddhistic pilasters giving force and beauty to the divisions, and a coping frieze full of animated, lively scenes of warfare and battle.

As this temple is hardly known, a few details will be welcome. Plate C shows the goddess Yamunā, in a rather rich, well-populated panel, with a head that is far too large, and, as is always the case at the Simhanātha, with rather ugly feet and hands. The decorative devices framing the panel, however, are excellent, with pilasters based on vases of plenty, and with capitals of overflowing pots, richly ornamented as one may expect it around 650-670 A.D.

The little lazy belle, pulling down a branch of a tree shown in Plate CI is almost as graceful as this poor artist could make it, though everything appears to be *cliché* and carved without personal involvement. Dead, too, seems the erotic scene in Plate XCVIII, in which, to mention only one point, the wavy lines indicating the hair are a mild effort on the part of the sculptor to represent the "wig" hair style. By far the most impressive is the facade of the vimāna, reproduced in Plate XCVII, the arrangement of which is admirable. In the large chaitya-window appears a Lakuli that looks very much like a Buddha; and the central deity at the base line is once again Kārttikeya. The battle scene in the frieze is a work of no mean merit, it is full of *élan* and movement.

This remarkable and little known monument deserves much greater attention. The repairs are often most disturbing (cement concrete), and the additional modern buildings housing the priests and the kitchen could easily be removed to some distance. The structure has stood a thousand and three hundred years fairly well this generation ought to ensure that it will stand, unchanged, another thousand years.

* * *

When we come to the *Baitāl Deul,* we are on far more controversial ground. The dates suggested by various scholars for this unique temple range over more than two hundred years; and as far as I can see they are mainly based on the shape of one single letter. Without underestimating for a moment the value and importance of palaeography, it seems to me carrying faith in the shape of letters too far to date an entire building simply because a palatal *śa* has "an arc or hook which forms its proper left limb, is not joined to its proper right limb."*

* *loc. cit.,* p. 33.

Now it must be observed that the inscription on the right door-jamb on the east consists of a single line, reading

Oṁ Śrī Chaṁndrā Uḍah

a totally unintelligible text, of which Dr Panigrahi clearly declares that he is unable to understand it, and that "it might have been a name or a mystic formula".* To my mind the inscription, even if it can be dated palaeographically with great precision, is of possible help ; if someone made a magic statement, inscribed, perhaps for good luck or by way of supplication, some words to the goddess Chāmuṇḍā (who actually resides within), we would know nothing valid about the date of the building, except that the surface of that door-jamb was in existence in the 8th century when this inscription was engraved. Nothing in the world prevents anyone to write on a surface ten years, fifty years, a hundred years or six hundred years later ; and, to prove this, the self-same temple has a proto-Oriya inscription also, datable to the 13th or 14th century. No one has ever suggested that the Baitāl Deul belongs to that late period. That the brief and unintelligible inscription on the door-jamb belongs to the period of Subhākaradeva I or, as it is suggested, a century after him, says *absolutely nothing valid about the erection, the date of building, of the Baitāl temple.*

Dr Panigrahi, himself cautious in putting too much faith in epigraphs, examines style and iconography also, and it is here that the present author believes a divergent conclusion is justified. Briefly, for a detailed argumentation is hardly necessary, Dr Panigrahi believes that it is possible "to associate the Baitāl temple with the art movement started by the Bhauma-Karas in Orissa" (p. 33). But on p. 35 we are told that Bhubaneshwar was "apparently included within the Bhauma Kingdom", though he immediately adds "It is true that no epigraphical record that can definitely connect any of its numerous ancient buildings with a Bhauma-Kara ruler, has yet been discovered." On p. 232 we read again Dr Panigrahi's statement : "No Bhauma inscription is found on any of the temples at Bhubaneshwar. The traditions current here are also silent about them."

With such a slender basis for a hypothesis we may as well forget about dynasties, and unintelligible epigraphs, and look at the art and architecture of the Baitāl Deul with unbiased eyes.

The Baitāl Deul differs from all other shrines in Bhubaneshwar, or for that matter anywhere else in India, in major aspects. Had it belonged to a "dynastic school", it would have been stylistically at least akin to other temples built by those kings.

* *loc. cit.*, p. 32.

It certainly has two parts. The jagamohana is again one of those early shrines with slanting roofs, made in two tiers, allowing the light to come in through clerestory windows. (Plate CII). It is an exceptionally small jagamohana, and it has *no sculptural ornamentation at all on the outside.* It has no pillars inside, as they were hardly needed, considering the small size of the prayer-hall ; and it has small śikhara-shaped ornaments, almost like ornamental turrets, at the four corners. As far as I know, there is no other temple with four miniature śikharas at the corners of the prayer-hall.

If everything about the jagamohana is unusual, one is tempted to say, "experimental", the śikhara or vimāna is even more unusual. It is far larger in ground plan than the prayer-hall, a huge, massive rectangular structure, the sides of which rise, in gentle curvature, towards a vault-shaped roof, utterly different from the *amalaka*-crowned tops of other Oriya temples looking like the top of a covered waggon, crowned by three pinnacles, each rising from a small *amalaka.* It has been compared, quite rightly, with the top member of South Indian *gopuras* (temple gate-houses), none of which go back to this century or again to the top of two of the rock-cut shrines at Mamallapuram near Madras, both similar ; and to the Buddhist chaitya-hall with which it is essentially identical in form—with the important difference that the roof stone of the Baitāl Deul is a single solid block of stone, and not hollow. (Cp. here Plate VIII for huts with such roofs).

This type of barrel-vault roof is found, incidentally, in two more shrines, both of little importance, in Bhubaneshwar, and recurs, as has been mentioned in Chapter 8, *suprā,* in a miniature form near the entrance of the Ranipur-Jharial Temple of the 64 Yoginīs.

If all these features are fundamentally different from the structures of the Bhubaneshwar (and Orissan) temples of the period (let us say, from 600 to 800 A.D.), the sculptural decoration is also considerably different on the Baitāl. There are points of contact, there are points of similarity, especially on the spire itself ; but the first impression and the most lasting one is that none of the Brahmanic temples in Bhubaneshwar show such a profound indebtedness to Buddhist manners of carving and ornamenting as the Baitāl Deul.

The lower, let us say, fourth part of the vimāna is a perpendicular, upright member, running like a straight ribbon on four sides (three visible), divided into small compartments and niches, separated by handsome pilasters—as Buddhistic as can be—into sections ; and very much as in Buddhist monasteries of the Ratnagiri type, the niches contain images of gods and goddesses, flanked by loving couples and such well-known Buddhist devices on lotus ornaments, addorsed lions, chaitya-windows, mixed

animal monsters with riders, and, best of all, the famous *zikkurat* motif.*

The quality of the carving is incomparably superior to that on the early temples, say the Paraśurāmeśvara or the Svarṇajāleśvara. The human bodies are exquisitely carved mannerist figures, the feet and hands are admirable, and show none of the clumsy modelling in the other shrines, the faces both of divinities and loving couples are handsome, the proportion of the head to the rest of the body much better than in the squat figures of, say, the Paraśurāmeśvara ; and in the loving couples there is grace, elegance, charm and sophistication all typical qualities of mannerist art. The carving is throughout conscious, precise, decisive, and outstandingly suited to the space at disposal ; the half-lotuses, to mention one example, are downright superb, and the floral ornaments exquisite. A great master has been at work here.

The "wig-like" head-dress is once again present. It is so important a part of the 7th century fashion that even the goddess Pārvatī (Plate CIII) sports it, though she also has a top bun of hair. A careful examination of dress and ornament convinces me that there is not a single element on the entire Baitāl temple allowing a date past the year 700 A.D. ; nor is there any evidence of that exaggerated *tribhaṅga* (three-bent) posture that comes in with the 8th century. Even the beautifully curving dancer, to the left of Pārvatī, in the same Plate, is still mannerist, not to mention the quiet and gently curving figures of the goddess, or the other lovers in the right-hand niche. For anyone with the slightest sensitivity for expressive form in art the couple to the right of the Durgā Mahishāsura-mardinī in Plate CIV must appear as *very nearly classical* in its restrained, noble attitude. For this single panel, in fact, a date under 600 A.D. would be justified ; others suggest a *slightly* later period.

To these facts must be added the most important one that there is not only well calculated, almost classical organization (Plate CV) of ornate masses, but also *considerable areas left unadorned* to anyone remotely acquainted with the difference between purely classical simplicity, and the love of profusion in late mannerist times, this alone would be a sure sign that we are here at the very beginning of mannerism. Compare the jagamohana of the Paraśurāmeśvara and observe how almost every inch there is crowned with carving ; compare the flanks of the Siṁhanātha temple of the Island, and see how much more profusely the areas are embellished with figures and ornamental sculpture it will be at once obvious that the Baitāl Deul cannot be later than either of those two shrines, and that, in fact, it must be earlier.

* Cp. C. L. Fabri, *Mesopotamian* etc., see Bibliography at the end.

Different, in many respects better in quality, much more conscious, much nearer to Buddhist art, the Baitāl Deul must be dated to about 600 A.D. ; made, it seems to me, by Buddhist-trained artists, a novel experiment to adapt their style to a Śākta shrine, it is *undoubtedly earlier than the Paraśurāmeśvara*, (which we have dated to the period 610-630 A.D.), because

1. The jagamohana of the Baitāl is smaller ;
2. The jagamohana has only two tiers of roof slabs ; it cannot be as late as the Siṁhanātha ;
3. The jagamohana is entirely undecorated, thus earlier than the profusely ornate Paraśurāmeśvara ;
4. The vimāna too has much larger unadorned areas, thus it must be nearer to the classic desire for simplicity ;
5. The human figures show early mannerist poses, with no tendency at exaggerated curvaceousness ;
6. The proportions are much better than on the Paraśurāmeśvara, the hands and feet, the faces and the waists, the breasts and the limbs are all much more close to classical perfection, often vastly superior to those on the Paraśurāmeśvara or the Siṁhanātha ;
7. Old Buddhist motifs such as the *zikkurat* motif or the addorsed animals, the half-lotus etc. abound on the Baitāl, whilst many of these have been discarded or diminished in importance on the later Paraśurāmeśvara ;
8. The execution is much closer to the superb craftsmanship found at Ratnagiri ;
9. The device of setting important icons in niches framed by pilasters is typically Buddhistic practice, partly abandoned in the two later temples for continuous or ill-framed images ;
10. The very roof of the śikhara itself suggests closer contact with Buddhist practice, and once again suggests that Buddhist artists were at work here ;
11. This strong connexion with Buddhism is further supported by the actual occurrence of two Buddha-figures in the preaching (*dharma-chakra-pravartana*) attitude on a stone post in front of the jagamohana.

Every important stylistic consideration tends to reinforce the contention that the Baitāl Deul was an early experiment in creating a Tāntric-Brahmanic temple when such a thing was a novelty ; it is not an unwarranted conjecture that Buddhist-Tāntric artists had to be asked to come and help ; for, first of all, the difference between Hindu Tāntric and Buddhist Tāntric sects was next to nothing, with perhaps the one important

exception that Buddhist Tāntrikas did not make human sacrifices (as the worshippers at the Baitāl Deul undoubtedly did) ; and secondly, because there is plentiful evidence in the sculpture and ornament on the temple itself that the artisans were deeply imbued with Buddhist ideas of figure-work and ornamentation.

Single śikhara-temples existed at that time ; thirty years later the excellent combination of the Paraśurāmeśvara jagamohana and vimāna was a further bold step to Hinduize, so to say, Buddhistic temple architecture. But the Master of the Baitāl Deul was a lone genius, and his unique work must be given a pride of place in the rapid development of the Oriya temple style. It took Hindu masters another three hundred years or more before, in the Mukteśvara temple, they could emulate the *sharp precision, the forceful consciousness of his chisel-work, the grace of his charming women, the strength of his male figures.* The Master of the Baitāl Deul was a true and great mannerist artist, incomparably superior to his novice imitators who made the clumsy figures of the Paraśurāmeśvara, the Svarṇajāleśvara or the Siṁhanātha of the Island.

* * *

There remain *the twin temples of Gandharādi,* again up-country, and not along the coast, to be discussed briefly. It is worth emphasizing that some of the finest creations of Oriya art are inland, for it has been asserted far too many times that "all Orissa art is restricted to the coast". Astonishing as the achievement of the Ek-āmra country undoubtedly is, with Bhubaneshwar's seven hundred temples and the shrines at Jagannāth Puri and Konarka, it is high time to realize what splendid work was done farther inland. Reference has already been made to the hardly discovered or totally unknown marvels of the District of Sambalpur and the Baudh country ; but as far as the two temples at Gandharādi are concerned, it is worth our while to start by asserting that these are in no way inferior to anything created at the same period nearer the seashore.

Gandharādi is in the Phulbani District, and the area near the twin temples shows signs of other ruins. These have never been properly investigated, though it seems to me that trial trenches at least would be greatly justified. To the North of the temples there is what looks like remains of a fort ; to the East the ruins suggest a town.

Now a Gandhata-pāti was the capital of the Bhañja kings in this area, mentioned as far back as the 5th century A.D., and the ancestor of the family of the Rajas of Baudh is known to have been a Gandhamardana. There is, hence, good reason to surmise that the present name Gandharādi has some connexion with the ancient capital, and that the ruins mark this old city.

The two temples are beautiful works of early temple architecture, and the date suggested by some authors, *i.e.* 9th century must be rejected out of hand. R. D. Banerji, in *Antiquities of Baudh State* (JB & ORS, XV, pp. 64ff.) talks about their "striking resemblance to the Paraśurāmeśvara at Bhubaneshwar". If they are so strikingly similar to the Paraśurāmeśvara, which was built around 610-630 A.D., it is a *non-sequitur* to put their date two hundred years later. These were the crucial two hundred years of bold experimenting and development, and the conception that an architect would build two shrines in the manner of a temple that had been erected two hundred years earlier stands against all reason. Art is not made that way.

The two temples at Gandharādi are dedicated to Nīlamādhava, the Krishṇa incarnation of Vishṇu, and to Siddheśvara, "Lord of the Blest", one of Shiva's manifestations. Whilst the Vishṇu temple sports the customary wheel or disk on the pinnacle, the Shiva temple, probably the only one in India, is marked by a *liṅga* or phallus on the tip of the turret—an unprecedented position, necessitated because the founder wanted to honour both gods equally.

Plate CVII shows the twin temples, identical almost stone for stone. The proportions are excellent, with a long rectangular prayer-hall or jagamohana in front of the tower, covered with *a two-tier roof of slanting slabs* of stone, between which clerestory windows allow some light to fall. The similarity to the Paraśurāmeśvara is, indeed, striking. Bases of pillars and pilasters testify to the fact that this hall was once pillared, as the Paraśurāmeśvara is now, but the pillars are missing now. The roof is supported on the cantilever principle, *i.e.* brackets reach out from the walls on which the great stone slabs of the roof rest. There were originally side entrances here too, but at some later date they had been walled up; the alteration is clearly seen even now. Serpent figures, *nāgas* and *nāginīs* flank what was once the doorway.

The śikhara or the tower over the *garbha-gṛiha* has a handsomely curving beehive shape, with decoration not quite on the same lines as the Paraśurāmeśvara; a triangular window allows light to fall into the Sanctum, and there is also a large window over the door leading from the jagamohana into the vimāna. Both these are unusual features, and must be considered "experimental", *ergo* characteristic of the 7th century or the beginning of the 8th.

That, indeed, is the right date suggested by all the surviving features; unfortunately, all the sculptures seen by Rakhal Das Banerji have disappeared since his visit, and every niche on both the temples gapes empty at you. It is impossible, therefore, to give a more accurate date on the basis of style or form development; but both the architectural features

and the simple and by no means highly ornate character of the walls suggest a date hardly beyond the end of the 7th century or the first decade of the 8th. The occurrence of a top slab on the roof, almost *a rudimentary third slab,* puts these twin shrines roughly into the period of the Siṁhanātha; the excellent organization of the space on the walls, with its niches neatly distributed, hints at a slightly later date than the Siṁhanātha. It is a thousand pities that these valuable and early temples have been robbed of their sculptural work; but to ascribe this flat-roofed early structure to the 9th century is patently impossible.

The twin temples of Gandharādi belong to the second phase of Oriya temple architecture the period of two-piece temples, such as the Paraśurāmeśvara and the Siṁhanātha, characterized by flat-roofed rectangular praying ante-chambers, with slanting slabs and clerestory windows on the jagamohana, and small but clearly developed śikharas. The obvious conclusion is that the Nīlamādhava and the Siddheśvara temples of Gandharādi belong to the same period, the same architectural point of development, the same century. I know of not a single reason or argument that would support a hypothesis that these two temples could have been built two hundred years later.

13

The Arrival of the Baroque

THERE is no denying that in our relation of the development of the Orissan temple there is now a gap left. This gap is not very large. It was larger before the discovery (and inclusion in this narrative) of the correct chronology of the temples that had followed the Paraśurāmeśvara, notably the gradual addition of a third roof slab in some up-country temples, such as the Siṁhanātha of the Island or the twin temples of Gandharādi. A few links only are missing now from the last of the flat-roofed jagamohanas or prayer-halls, about 800 A.D., to the earliest pyramidal roofed *piḍhā deul,* which appears to be the Mukteśvara in Bhubaneshwar. The date of this gem of architecture is around 900 A.D. according to some, notably Dr Panigrahi, it may be 960 or so. I repeat in a vast history of architectural development this is not a painfully large gap, and will, one hopes, be bridged one day.

But stylistically, the Mukteśvara as well as the other masterpieces of the subsequent period, the Rājarāni, the most beautiful of all, or the Brahmeśvara, the Liṅgarāja and the Pārvatī—all in Bhubaneshwar—belong to the world of the baroque; mannerism has been left behind, and in these magnificent works of art, among the best in India, the artist turns to that

full, luscious romanticism that baroque means, rich, ornate, lush, a delight in excess, a love of profusion and multiplication, a passion for the beauty of the female form, a sensuous delight in the loveliness of the world.

It is impossible to understand the aesthetics of this wonderful period without a reference to that important art historical term, the baroque. Archaeologists, unacquainted with art history, have been attempting to fight the "introduction of these European terms", as the late R. B. Dikshit did ; but the fact simply is that it is just not possible to talk of art forms and formal development without using the proper terms for the proper period in aesthetic style. Baroque is a style, whether in China or Timbuctoo ; it has a distinct connotation of an aesthetic approach, of an attitude, of a love of certain forms, it has an ideal of beauty vastly different from the archaic or the classical ; and people who use glibly terms such as 'archaic' or 'classical' ought to known clearly where the classic style ends, where the mannerist period begins, and where the mannerist style blossoms out into a full-fledged baroque, finally to play itself out, as it were, in a rococo. These three last mentioned styles, mannerism, baroque and rococo, are characteristics in the highest possible degree of the main period of Orissan temple art, from the 6th to the 14th centuries A.D. and all the greatest masterpieces of Orissan sculpture and architecture belong to these centuries.

The exquisite facade of the *Mukteśvara,* shown in Plates CVIII and CIX instantly reveals itself to anyone as a typical and splendid school example of the baroque style a lovely feeling for ornamental forms, a superb organization of decorative elements, a delight, a sensuous delight, in rich and elaborate floral and geometric patterns, and an equally passionate delight in the charms of the female body, sensual, sinuous, eye-catching—in other words, romantic attitudes as against the classical. A comparison with the surface work on the Baitāl Deul suffices to demonstrate the considerable stylistical difference between the mannerist simplicity and the gentle departure of that period from the classic ideals on the one hand, and the passionate love of rich ornamentation, multiplication and sensuous revelling in lovely forms that the baroque brings in on the Mukteśvara. (Cp. Plate CV.).

The Mukteśvara is, probably, the smallest of the group of temples in this period. Its height is about 10.5 metres, or approximately 34 feet. It has many elements of earlier temples, such as a *toraṇa* or gateway, traceable to Buddhist stūpa gateways, though constructionally and from an ornamental point of view greatly differing from those *toraṇas.* (Plate CX). This gateway arch has luscious and almost naked women, with exquisite bodies and smiling faces, reclining as it were, and, in their pos-

tures alone, vaguely reminiscent of the reclining female figures of Michelangelo on the Medici tombs in Florence.* Other archaic elements are latticed windows on the model of those of the Paraśurāmeśvara, and vary different from later period designs ; a compound wall of moderate height that is almost octagonal, as in older examples ; and, most important of all, the newly created *piḍhā deul,* the jagamohana with the pyramidal roof, developed from the three-slabbed roofs of our former examples, shows every sign of being an experimental piece of work. Neither on the Mukteśvara, nor in the slightly later Rājarāni, has the architect yet come to the invention of crowning this pyramidal roof with the *amlā* stone of later days instead of the *amalaka,* we have here a small Vase of Plenty, a *kalaśa* for a pinnacle. We have also to notice once again that the wall sculptures contain hardly any sacred figures : seductive belles and sporting monkeys predominate.

It must have been observed that this author has been studiously avoiding the use of Oriya architectural terms, except where absolutely unavoidable, and even there offering approximate English equivalents. At this point, however, it may be felt necessary to get acquainted with a few terms that will help us in watching the gradual development of the temple. Though all the essential technical terms are explained in the Glossary at the end of this book, the following select translations will be, I believe, useful when examining the illustrations given in Figs. 3 and 4.

Some, though not all, temples have a *base* (*pābhāga*).

Above this base one finds one or two horizontal *sculptured ribbons* (the lower one is called *tala jāṅgha,* the upper one *upar jāṅgha*).

The entire *temple body,* the base, the sculptured ribbons and the small decorated ribbon above it, all below the spire, is the *body* (*bāḍa*).

Above this body proper of the temple rises the actual *spire* (*gaṇḍi*).

The *tower top* crowns the whole spire and is called the *masṭaka.* It has actually three main portions, of which we only need mention here the *amlā* or *amalaka,* terms I do not attempt to translate ; and the pinnacle is a *vase* (of plenty) which is called in architectural treatises the *kalaśa.***

There is, however, one more division of the spire that is rather important in the history of the śikhara (this word, universal in Sanskrit treatises, is too well known to be discarded, though hardly, used in Orissa) ; that is, the spire or *gaṇḍi* is *perpendicularly* divided into what I call *ribs.* These are called, as can be seen in the Figure 3, *pagas.* As time goes on, more and more of these ribs are used to divide and enrich the spire. Mrs Debala

* This is not a haphazard comparison. In the Medici tombs we meet with Michelangelo's mannerism.

** The spelling *kalasa* is also correct, and occurs in dictionaries as a *var. lectio.*

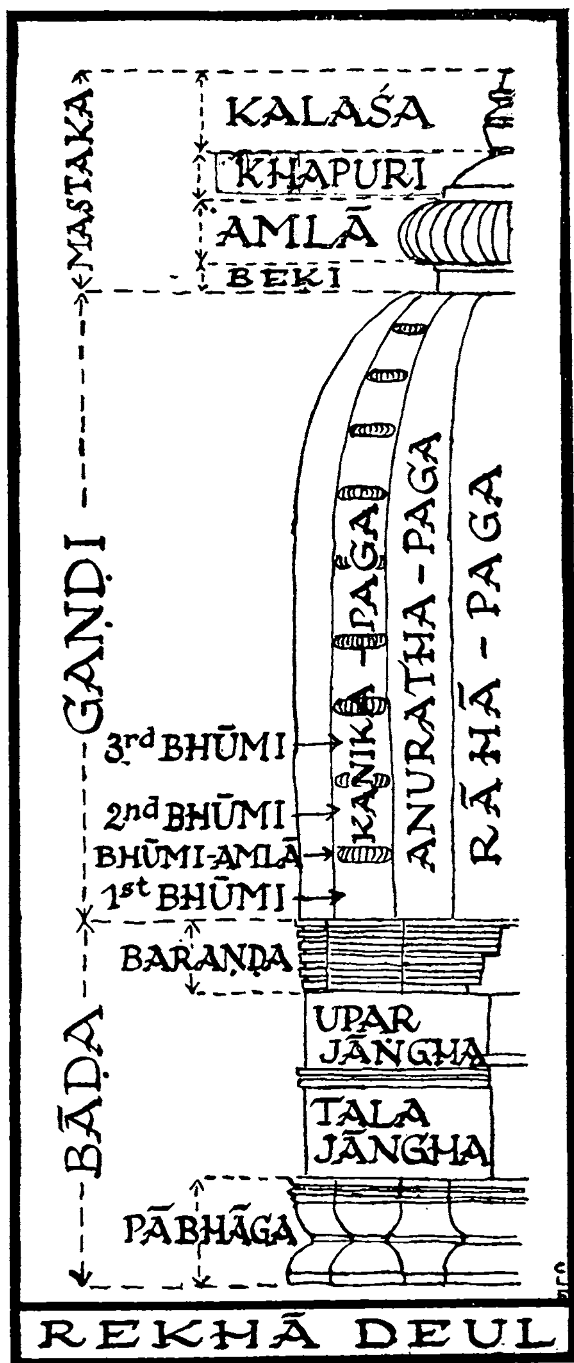

KALAŚA
KHAPURI
AMLĀ
BEKI
MASTAKA
GANḌI
RĀHĀ-PAGA
ANURATHA-PAGA
KAṆIKĀ-PAGA
3rd BHŪMI
2nd BHŪMI
BHŪMI-AMLĀ
1st BHŪMI
BARANḌA
UPAR JĀNGHA
TALA JĀNGHA
PĀBHĀGA
BĀḌA
REKHĀ DEUL

Fig. 3

Mitra calls these "segments", but I suggest that "ribs" is a nearer English equivalent.

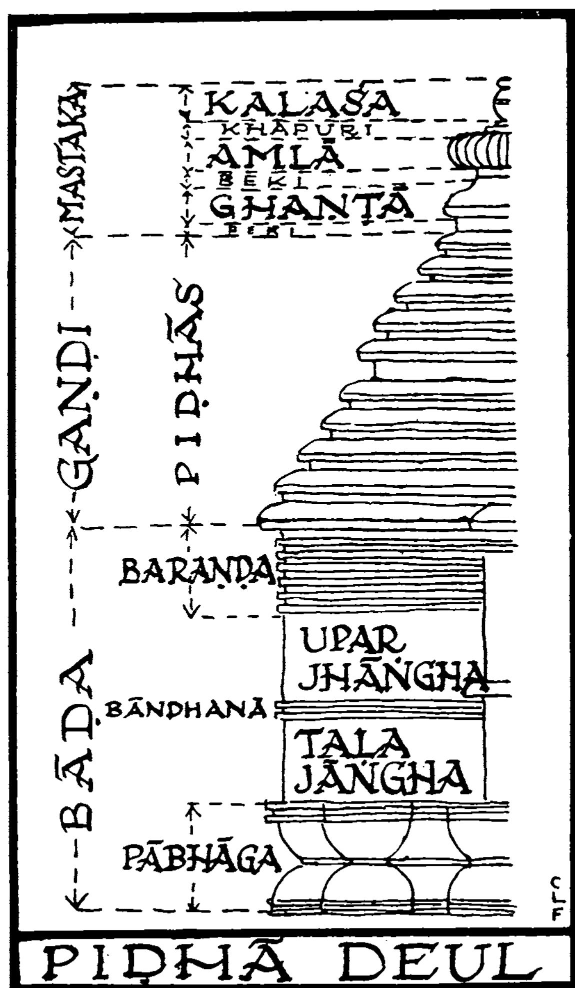


Fig. 4

In Fig. 4 is seen the jagamohana, or prayer-hall, also called the *piḍhā deul*, consisting essentially of the same three parts as the vimāna, *viz.* the *body* of the temple, with or without a base, the *spire* and the *top* of the

tower. The only basic difference is that the spire here is the pyramidal roof, consisting of roof slabs (*piḍhās*).

These are the most necessary technical terms, the others are of minor interest from our point of view.

The most characteristic development is the multiplication of the perpendicular ribs (the *pagas*, also called sometimes *rathakas*), *i.e.* an increase in the number of jutting out portions, projections, on the other face of the śikhara, or, if you like, the *rekhā* deul. Inside the temple, the chambers remain square, whatever happens on the outside both the jagamohana (the prayer-hall) and the vimāna or the tower, have plain, unadorned, solid walls, almost invariably just square ; but it is on the outside that the extrovert character of baroque begins its love of multiplication and complication around the year 800 *plus*. We have first *tri-ratha* shrines, *viz.* śikharas that are divided into three ribs running down all the way from the top to the base ; later this becomes *pañcha-ratha,* five-ribbed, then *sapta-ratha,* seven-ribbed, and we have even *nava-ratha* vimānas, that is, sanctums with nine perpendicular divisions into projecting ribs. This, obviously, is the characteristic love of the baroque for multiplication, decorative enrichment, ornamental complication. At the same time there is a marked tendency to raise the śikhara to greater and greater heights—this means, to be sure, the multiplication of the *bhūmis* (see Fig. 3).

Take the Mukteśvara again, to return to our present subject. The *rekhā deul* is small, there are only five *bhūmis,* but the tower has five ribs. The entire vimāna is only 15 feet square, the jagamohana no more than 26 feet square (about 8 metres square).

The *toraṇa* is one of oddities of the Mukteśvara ; the other strange element is that *the entrance door faces west.* As far as I know, this is the only temple facing west in Bhubaneshwar, and I ascribe this unusual element to the fact that almost nothing was "canonical" at this period, the artists improvised, experimented, used their own inventiveness, and it took another hundred and fifty or two hundred years before 'rules' started influencing their work.

The dominating subject-matter of the sculptural ornamentation, apart from arabesques, floral ornaments, creepers (*laṭā*) and geometric decorations, is not gods and heavens, celestial and divine themes, but earthy matters. Beautiful 'idle girls' (*alasa-kanyā*), lovely dryads and nymphs, hunters and horsemen, monkeys and crocodiles are far more clearly in evidence than the small, almost hidden images of gods, such as the Nine Planets, Lakuli, or Buddhist and Jain divinities (Avalokiteśvara, Dhyāni Buddha or a Jaina Tīrthaṅkara, recently identified, correctly, by Dr. Panigrahi). The attractive heraldic looking device that Orissan temple architects invented to decorate the śikhara, the so-called *bho,* is a handsome

ornament with no more than a lone head (perhaps a Buddha-head) in the centre of the window ; by comparison, a Dancing Shiva almost disappears, small and insignificant.

It is no good enumerating the small religious and cult figures, introduced here and there, in miniature niches it is entirely untrue, I stoutly deny, that they prevail in the whole scheme. On the contrary, the most conspicuous, the most obvious and the largest figures, standing out prominently to be lit up by the sun, are lovely girls, belles, *sundarīs,* twisting and bending their deliciously shaped figures into sensuous and splendid forms. Plate CIX is full of them, aye, even the *Nāga-kanyās* (serpent maidens) have sensually depicted upper bodies, whilst the other dryads, bending down a branch of a tree (*śāla-bhañjikās*) are little masterpieces of baroque carving, vastly superior to the amateurish lovers shown on, say, the Paraśurāmeśvara.

In Plate CXI I illustrate a subject-matter from the Mukteśvara that has become such a favourite with Oriya *śilpins* that there exists hardly a temple without this theme it shows a lovely girl, waiting at an open door for the return of her lover, whilst the parrot, perched on the door leaf, repeats the words of endearment that he had whispered in her ears last time he visited her—to make waiting doubly tortured. The carving is admirable, the girl gently turning an ear to the chattering parrot, her lovely face expressing both delight and expectant sadness a masterpiece of genre sculpture. The thrice-bent pose is typically baroque ; so are the sensually carved breasts and hip, the lovely hands caressing the door, and the rich personal ornaments, crown, necklace, earrings, bracelets, belt with hanging loops and anklets. Framing and organization of composition are outstandingly well done.

An entire volume could be written on the exquisite sculpture that covers this beautiful little temple, the great majority of them, without a shadow of doubt, earthy, sensuous and sensual. The gentle humour that instigated the artist to carve a series of sporting monkeys has been mentioned here and there ; but a stubborn belief of some contemporaries that our ancestors must have felt about modesty, sexual behaviour and matters of morals exactly what the present generation in India feels, clouds the issue of the highly voluptuous treatment of lovely women. This is not the place to refute the old wives' tales quoted, *e.g.* by that most worthy scholar, Dr Panigrahi (pp. 107-108) about the high spiritual purpose that induces artists to depict obscene or erotic sculpture ; enough be said if I state that I do not believe one word of that ridiculous tale told by an obscure traveller in "Forbidden Tibet".* To me it is patently obvious that the great

* The entire story is hearsay evidence, the author does not claim having seen himself any part of it.

artists who made these masterpieces of sculpture, some of them comparable with the finest productions in any country of the world, and some of them unsurpassed in any age or any clime, were thoroughly human beings, who enjoyed this world with all her pleasures, and, like their fellow artists in many other countries, looked upon the human body as the greatest masterpiece of the Creator. In any case, a strong sensual element pervades all Indian sculpture, from the early carvings at Bharhut onwards, and gradually develops into a delight in the lovely shape of the feminine body ; and, this is most important, this sensuous element is evident even in single figures, to a very high degree, in the centuries we are dealing with now, quite apart from scenes of actual copulation that the 150 or 200 years of Tāntric flowering bring with them.

I illustrate here in Plate CXII one delicious little female body, a belle, a *sundarī*, or an *alasa-kanyā*, one of the many on the walls of the Mukteśvara. The exquisite beauty of the smiling face—as lovely a face as any artist could create—remains even after mutilation ; and the tensely twisted body brings out all the most delectable aspects of the feminine figure. The beautifully rounded breasts, the handsome hip, the suggestive pose of the two legs, all tend to emphasize all that is lovable and enjoyable in the body of a lovely young girl. Sophists may "explain" why she is carved on the walls of a temple ; the simple explanation that it is human to love and natural to admire beauty will hold good when all theories of hair-splitting spirituality-mongers have been laughed out of court. If there is one "spiritual" lesson that this delightful creature suggests, it is that life down here *is* delightful, there are joys waiting for every good man, and let us be grateful for what the Creator had given us.

How thoroughly baroque all this is, with the twisted and sinuous movement, the sensuous enjoyment of surprising posture ! And on the top there is the involved, handsomely carved floral ornament, a masterly "space-filler", with volutes and scrolls of exquisite craftsmanship. Even the "leaf" or branch on which she steps with her right foot is turned into a decorative, ornamental design.

* * *

The Mukteśvara of Bhubaneshwar is undoubtedly the first fully unfolded baroque temple in Orissa ; the others of this period, roughly from 900 to 1200 A.D., include the Rājarāni, the most perfect of all, the Brahmeśvara, a superb experiment, and two of the least known temples, to which I shall devote a separate chapter, the mighty Liṅgarāja and the small but exquisite Pārvātī, all of Bhubaneshwar.

Among the characteristics of baroque art is a highly sensitive feeling for decorative organization ; this implies sophisticated design, and yet, at the same time, a search for novelty. In the baroque style there are always surprises the classical style *conforms* to accepted canons of beauty, but the romantic style revels in the *unusual,* the novel, the spectacular—aye, the wondrous. The European baroque included in the 18th century not only delightful shepherdesses dallying with their swains ; it also included Spanish images in which genuine golden arrows pierce the heart of the Mother of Christ in Sorrow, dramatic crucifixes suspended by invisible wires hanging over the altar, angels that hang in midair by miraculous threads, and cupolas so painted that they look as if the sky had opened up above the worshipper in the church, and God Almighty appeared in the midst of clouds. The wondrous, the miraculous, the astonishing—all these are characteristic elements of baroque and romantic art.

To this category belong the magnificently proportioned temples of the Rājarāni and the Liṅgarāja—the latter of fantastic proportions, huge, overwhelming, almost unbelievable ; the Jagannātha of Puri, so gigantic that you can see the tower from seven miles away ; or that mighty chariot of the sun, the temple of Konarka, whose course through the day is accompanied by the celestial music of vast and lovely musician angels on the parapet, flying, as it were, in the air.

With the *Rājarāni Temple at Bhubaneshwar* we are as near to perfect baroque style as possible ; not only is everything superbly organized, consciously aimed at moving you with its beauty, not only is the design as near perfection as possible, but this temple is, fortunately, so situated, in the middle of fields, alone, that you can quietly commune with it, converse with it and become familiar with her half-hidden beauty. Other temples, notably the Liṅgarāja, may claim equal excellence it is far, far more difficult to become intimate with it, because of its vast size, its many unapproachable parts, far above eye level, and, worst of all, because it is hemmed in on all sides by dirty bazaars, and its compound is cluttered up by dozens of later structures. But, the Rājarāni stands quietly and solitarily in the fields, and you can spend hours with her and discover all that she offers to you.

The Rājarāni holds many surprises for you. (Plate CXIII). There is the astonishing sophistication that the *jagamohana* is, for all practical purposes, almost entirely unadorned ; a conscious piece of sophistication, to make the superb and rich decoration on the vimāna the more effective. It *is* more effective, the contrast between the plain surfaces and the ornate ones is dramatic.

The tower itself is not only in marvellous proportion to the pyramidal roof of the jagamohana, it also introduces a striking novelty small śikhara

towers rise above the body of the temple, reach out towards the pyramidal roof, grow like rocks towards a mountain summit, and make the eye wander in wonder from the base towards the crowning *amlā ;* it is like climbing a hill, higher and higher, and reaching, triumphantly, the pinnacle. Here is the novel element again very few other temples have śikharas with miniature śikharas building it up, on the model of the Rājarāni.

The pyramidal roof is still crowned by a vase (*kalaśa*), as in the Muktesvara, and not by an *amalaka,* as in the later temples, so that this, as other stylistical considerations, suggests a date around 1000 A.D.

It is when we come to the sculptural element that we are confronted with one of the most original masterpieces of Indian temple art. The *vimāna* is now provided with so many protrusions, angles, recessing corners and ribs that it almost strikes one as a circular structure, or a star-shaped tower with numerous points. The entire body, with its two horizontal ribbons of decoration, is lavishly covered with what may be fairly correctly described as a forest of ornamentation, floral and geometric patterns, creepers and scrollwork, turning the whole surface into a vast Enchanted Forest, in which live, as it were, spirits of the trees, dryads of exquisite charm, beautiful young girls in seductive poses, now admiring their lovely, smiling faces in a mirror, now adjusting an ankle-bell, now stepping out from the tree in which they live, now bending a branch in graceful movement, now playing with a child, or a peacock, or a monkey. The entire Enchanted Forest sings a paean to the beauty of these lovely girls, the most prominent of all the sculpture on these walls.

Lower down, in miniature frames, as part of the decoration of the base (*pābhāga*) we have a number of religious subjects, such as a dancing Shiva —one of the poorest, most ill composed and ill designed panels—or an astonishingly inferior Pārvatī (for illustrations of these, *vide* Dr Panigrahi's *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneshwar,* Figs. 111 and 120). All these are the works of a lesser master, and they are tucked away, almost impertinently, as unimportant subjects, vastly less prominent than the lovely figures of the *tala jāṅgha* or lower sculptured ribbon on the *vimāna.*

The upper ribbon has erotic couples in passionate embrace and in copulation some of the most handsome representations of this theme, greatly excelling both in style and delicacy almost anything that Khajuraho can offer. There is no pornography here at all this is great art, in which one of the most exciting sources of human satisfaction is depicted with exquisite artistry.

The only important religious subjects that find illustration on the lower sculptured ribbon are the *dikpālas,* the divine guardians of the quarters,

North, South, West etc., carved with the same superb artistry and by the same hand that fashioned the lovely dryads. In Plate CXIV is visible one of the most handsome of these, Varuṇa, Guardian God of the Western Quarter, standing in an attitude of benevolence, with his symbol, the noose, and his vehicle, the crocodile—for Varuṇa is god of the seas too.* This sculpture is as sensuous and as full of the love of beautiful form, as any of the dryad girls ; Varuṇa here is a handsome and delightfully smiling young man, standing in a pose of ease and nonchalance, aristocratic, his swaying movement suggesting music and dance.

One of the most perfect of these darlings of the Enchanted Forest is illustrated in Plate CXV. A relievo of this quality would be hailed in any country as a masterpiece, and far superior in grace and liveliness to anything I could think of from the brush of Boucher or Fragonard.** The exquisite smile, the soft and tenderly carved breasts, the swelling hip, the shapely legs and the easy posture of this beautifully proportioned girl declare this to be a work of baroque and extrovert art. This is not Sir Kenneth Clark's *Venus pudica,* she is not shy of her body's charms, she displays them with a *joie de vivre* that is so characteristic of Indian art, so little recognized and acknowledged by spirituality-mongering authors. She wears nothing but a pair of diminutive "shorts" and a lovely bejewlled belt from which hang loops ; anklets, bracelets, armlets, necklace and an elaborate head-dress make her body richer ; a denizen of the forest, she not only grows out, as it were, of the tree of which she is the living spirit, a wood nymph, a dryad, but she grows out of a plant too, standing as she does on a fantastically foliated lotus. Scrolls and creepers surround her in elegant designs she is part of Nature in all her lush fertility. Only fools can be ashamed of God's good creation.

The other dryad here illustrated, Plate CXVI, is a tenser, intenser girl, with a slender waist and a lovely, soft belly ; her strongly protruding bosom is, alas, now split where the two slabs of stone out of which this relief is carved, meet ; but the legs, crossed and tense, remind one of the long, straight legs that Khajuraho sports. Bending down a branch of a tree, she seems to grow out of a vast lily, proliferating with suggestions of fertility and the bounty of Nature. Perhaps the tenseness has been carried too far here—baroque has a tendency to carry things too far, to be sure—and the (proper) left arm appears to be a not too happy solution, but it brings in variety, and variety and novelty are of the very essence of the baroque taste. There is a profusion of jewellery, elaborate earrings, vast bracelets, rich armlets ; but when all is said, the main attention is

* The name Varuṇa is cognate with the Greek-Roman Uranus.

** Francoīs Boucher, 1703—1770 ; Jean Honoré Fragonard, 1732—1806.

drawn to the powerfully modelled breasts, one half of which is covered, most diaphanously to be sure, by a thin scarf.

Artificiality and sensuality are carried one step farther in a third sample of the belles I illustrate here from the Rājarāni : the beauty in Plate CXVII is twisted in what can only be described as a *chatur-bhaṅga,* four times twisted pose, for whilst the head looks left, the breasts look right, fully visible, the body is shown in a bold stride allowing the artist to show the girl's buttocks also fully a feat of contortionism more frequently seen at Khajuraho than in Bhubaneshwar. She is toying with a peacock (symbol of masculinity) that is pecking at her head jewel ; and she is pulling down a flower from a tree above, whilst a monkey is looking on. And where she touches the tree with her right foot, flowers spring up an old favourite subject of poets and sculptors. This girl has little of the natural seductiveness of the lovely in Plate CXV this is seduction with a much more openly declared sensuality.

People of excessive prudery and modesty may not like to face the simple fact that pulchritude and sensuality lord it over the spiritual and the religious in the superb masterpiece that is the Rājarāni ; but the fact is on the walls for every one divine image there are four or five lovelies embellishing the decoration—apart from the frankly erotic sculpture that adorns the upper ribbon. *Mores* change, and though many women still go about in Orissa without covering their breasts, their number is diminishing, and more and more women buy themselves blouses ; yet only ten years ago no more than two women out of ten possessed a blouse in a State in which 54 per cent of the population is counted as aborigines.

It is a great fallacy to judge morals in past ages by present standards. Love and love-making were extolled in the 8th to 11th centuries as among the most wonderful gifts of a bounteous nature, leading on to satisfaction and bliss. Poetry is full of it, not to mention the *Daśa-kumāra-charita* or the *Kādambarī,* those admirable novels of the 8th-10th centuries in which love is the central theme ; or the *Gīta-govinda,* composed in Orissa, in which love, physical love, is described as divine.

But the architecture and the sculpture of the Rājarāni are both so great that even if you forget the subject-matter it still stands as one of the greatest creations of aesthetic sensibility.

* * *

With *the Brahmeśvara temple,* also at Bhubaneshwar, we come to a temple that bears much resemblance to the Rājarāni, is obviously of the same period, yet is, in many ways, marked by qualities of precision, calculation, exactness, logic and reason, much less in evidence in the warm

exuberance and long-haired spontaneity of the Rājarāni. There is something so precise, almost mathematical, about this temple that it stands out as different from all the others ; it bears, perhaps, a slight resemblance in the high organization of its decoration to the Dakshaprajāpati temple, up-country, to be mentioned later. (Chapter 14). Yet, purely sculpturally speaking, the style is so close to that of the Rājarāni that nothing but the slightest difference in date can be surmised. The probable date of the Brahmeśvara is likely to be about 1050 A.D.

Chronologically, the temple is an important milestone, for it possesses—or anyhow, it did, until it got lost—a detailed inscription not only giving a date and a name but also a clear statement that this temple was built by Kolāvatī Devī, mother of king Uddyota-keśarin, of the Somavaṁśī dynasty, in the latter's 18th regnal year.

This is great epigraphic help, indeed. As the pyramidal section, the *piḍhā deul,* is still crowned by a *kalaśa* or vase, but under it there is now an *amlā,* an invention obviously datable to a post-Rājarāni period ; and as this temple must date from the middle of the 11th century, here is evidence that the superimposition of an *amalaka* on the jagamohana's pyramidal roof *did not occur before the middle of this century.*

But the baroque still likes variety and change, and so we have something unusual in the Brahmeśvara the temple belongs to a category called in Sanskrit *pañchāyatana* (five-shrined), as it consists of the central main shrine, and four smaller śikhara shrines in the four corners. This makes a fine composition, though some of us might consider it slightly crowded ; and, according to some scholars, it has a hoary origin as it goes back to the Vedic fire altar.

It is possible to contend that the enclosure wall gives one too tight a feeling and that the four corner-shrines are rather too close to the central temple ; it is even far more true that the pyramidal roof, the *piḍhā deul,* is far too heavy and oppressive, and that in the Rājarāni the proportions were much better, especially the height of the jagamohana, with its splendid bare walls, bearing a less top-heavy superstructure. It is also obvious to a sensitive observer that the beautifully built up tower of the Rājarāni, with the miniature corner śikharas, creates a gently curving beehive shape, whereas the śikhara of the Brahmeśvara rises in straighter lines, to curve rather suddenly inwards nearer the *amlā.*

But with these minor criticisms and comparisons, the Brahmeśvara is still one of the most harmonious and beautiful temples among the many surviving specimens in Orissa ; and its sculptural ornamentation is among the finest and may rank equal with that of the Mukteśvara, the Rājarāni and the Liṅgarāja.

An interesting difference between the Rājarāni and the Brahmeśvara is

that whilst the former looks like an Enchanted Forest, full of floral ornaments, scrolls and other *gelbāi* and *laṭā* decorations, these are almost totally absent in the Brahmeśvara. If the Rājarāni was the world of the primeval forest, with its delightful denizens of seductive tree-maidens, the Brahmeśvara looks much more like an urban counterpart, in which the charmers and the belles live in small houses, little niches and miniature temples. Here and there a floral ornament bursts out, as on the edge of some eaves ; but on the whole, the Brahmeśvara has no great love for these arabesques and foliages, and almost all the divisions are architectonic. This strange and, to me, inexplicable difference alone makes it impossible to surmise that the artist was the same in the two temples. Even where a belle is brought into play on the walls of the Rājarāni, she grows out, as it were, from a flower, a lotus or a water-lily : these are unknown on the Brahmeśvara, where every belle and every *alasa-kanyā* idle about in niches, shrines and other structural compartments.

A rather large number of scenes of Masters and Disciples suggests that the Pāśupata sect, with its Gurus and followers had something to do with this temple. These scenes of teacher-and-disciples are well done, and it will be observed that they occur frequently enough on the next temple (in order of time), the Lingarāja.

But when all is said, the worldliness of the Rājarāni is continued in the Brahmeśvara. Even Mrs Debala Mitra observes that "the themes . . . are mostly erotic couples and *nāyikās* and very rarely deities", and though she restricts this to the upper parts, it is true of the entire temple. Facts must be faced this was a period in which religion sought happiness in worldly joys. All the spirituality-mongering of lofty souls of today cannot deny the evidence of the eyes. These sculptures are works of great art, and of an art revelling in the beauty of the earth, in the charms of sex, in the pleasures of physical life. Dr Coomaraswamy was entirely mistaken when, misled by this insistence of a high spiritual purpose behind all Indian art, he went so far as to believe that the Indian artist did not want to "express himself" in search of "beauty". Having believed this for many years, I have come to the ultimate conclusion that this attitude is an entirely false, anaesthetic view, not supported by any fact. The Rājarāni, the Brahmeśvara or the Lingeśvara, not to mention Konarka's Sun Temple, are eloquent testimony to the contrary, and speak to the attentive listener in a language of unmistakable clarity of the joys of life, of the beauty of this sub-lunar world, of the happiness of love.

Plate CXVIII shows the entire five-temple compound, with the somewhat topheavy jagamohana. In Plate CXIX a good portion of the vimāna facade is seen, with its beautiful organization into compartments, and little niches in which live and love elongated, elegant female figures, lovers and

flying divinities. Floral ornament is present, but on a less lavish scale than of the Rājarāni. It is delicate, sophisticated, almost ivory-like.

Variety here is found in the detail, and many more illustrations would be valuable, however universal the scheme of distribution remains. It is the skill of the sculptor in filling his little compartments with a delightful riches of elegant creatures that impresses. It might be said that in its rational organization there is less wild delight than in the Rājarāni. There certainly is not less skill.

14

Some Unknown or Little Known Temples

IN the 11th and 12th centuries Orissa must have created hundreds of temples, many of which must remain unknown, some in ruins, others rebuilt beyond recognition, many more scattered up and down the country, never seen by the common traveller. At this point, before turning to the most famous temples that follow in point of time the Rājarāni and the Bhrahmeśvara, I have to turn to a few shrines hardly ever noticed by previous research workers, and one at least totally unknown to archaeology and art history.

It was during one of my several visits to Orissa that Dr Mayadhar Mansinha, the poet, drew my attention to a temple of which he had heard rumours, though he had never visited. I found this shrine in a miniature village of a few houses, after a most laborious search, during which, to mention one odd circumstance only, I passed the temple within a few hundred yards twice, without seeing it behind tall trees ; as both times I was sent on farther by local informants. When I finally managed to discover the little village of Madhaba, I found to my delight a magnificent temple of the 11th century, a marvel of architecture and of sculpture, never visited before by any archaeologist or art historian. I have since visited this

shrine a second time, and had occasion to examine its chronicle with the assistance of the local priest. It is a palm-leaf manuscript, dated 1258 in the Gajapati era, a little over a 100 years old. The *temple is now called Mādhava,* but according to the manuscript, its name is Mādhavānanda. The legend has it that it was built by Yuddhishṭhira when he was in exile, in place of an older temple that was 2066 years old. There was a tank of 9 acres attached to it, called Maṇikarnika.*

According to the manuscript, the temple is situated on the bank of the sacred river Prāchī (a dry bed of a river is not far off, but was dry on both occasions when I visited Madhaba village).

The nearest village of any size is Niali, District Cuttack, about 2¾ miles away though it is not far from Bhubaneshwar; but as I had to go by a circuitous route and search for it, I can only guess the distance which may be about 24 km from Bhubaneshwar town. Part of the road is metalled.

The old portions of the temple consist of a vimāna (tower) and a preceding prayer-hall, or jagamohana. Almost attached to the latter, but obviously of much later construction is a third stone structure that serves as eating-hall, *bhoja-maṇḍapa.*

The tower or śikhara has been repaired in recent years, and the modern cement covers much of its ancient beauty. Even so, it can be at once seen that the outline of the śikhara is beautiful, that it bears quite a resemblance, especially in proportions, to the Rājarāni, and that it has a few surviving corner-śikharas, as the Rājarāni has. The *piḍhā-deul* is most impressive, and has a broad-based *amlā* on top, which makes it later than the Rājarāni. It was explained in the previous chapter that there is ample evidence that the crowning of the jagamohana by an amlā, instead of a kalaśa, is datable to the middle of the 11th century. The manuscript in the possession of the local priest says that the temple is 1200 years old, which is impossible as it would take the shrine back to the 7th or 8th century.

The organization of the surface decoration appears to be half that of the Brahmeśvara, half that of the Rājarāni. Many little shrines, niches and temples house figures of great elegance and little distortion or sinuousness; but some at least of the floral and creeper ornamentation of the Rājarāni occurs on the Mādhava whilst it is absent or almost absent on the Brahmeśvara.

There are some painted plaster figures inside, as well as some mural paintings. These are reported to have been made about thirty years ago.

The general view of the Mādhava temple, shown in Plate CXX instantly gives an impression of similarity with the Rājarāni. The *piḍhā-deul* or

* This suggests an old Yaksha name.

jagamohana with the pyramidal slab-roof bears great likeness to the Rājarāni, though the crowning *ghaṇṭā* and *amlā* are much more developed, and suggest a date around 1100. On the other hand, the tower itself, even with its present poor renovations with modern cement, is much nearer both in shape and curvature to that of the Rājarāni, and the two ribbons, the *jhaṅgās* of sculpture on the body are markedly similar to those on the Rājarāni. No doubt, the entire jagamohana is decorated here, and in this respect it resembles the Brahmeśvara more. We thus come to a date more or less certain of the second half of the 11th century, perhaps the end of it.

In Plate CXXI I show a good portion of the facade of the Mādhava to show the admirable organization of the surface, more like the Brahmeśvara than the Rājarāni. As on those two shrines, here too the religious subjects are far fewer and less dominant than the attractive female figures ; as in the Brahmeśvara, most of them live in little structural compartments, niches, temples, shrines of sorts, and there is no "Enchanted Forest". Readers will also observe that the number of extruding and receding angles has been increased a sure sign of later development. In fact, in many cases where the Rājarāni would burst out into flowery ornamentation, we have here numerous angles upon angles, bringing variety into the surface of the stone, but not creepers and floral ornamentation.

The flywhisk (*chaurī*) bearer in Plate CXXII is marked by grace and elegance, and very little torsion ; an almost classical pose is slightly contradicted by the elongated slit of the eyes, a famous indication of a date around 1100 A.D. On the right, in the same plate, we have one of the charmers under a tree in a sensuous pose ; but, strangely enough, even the tree is covered by *a piḍhā-roof*, ending in an *amlā*. And in the beautiful vīṇā-player and the belle under the tree in Plate CXXIII we have two gently swaying girls, hardly baroque in pose at all, though the eye-slits are strongly elongated. The belle on the right in this plate stands on a lotus closely resembling the tree-nymphs of the Rājarāni, growing out of a highly evolved mass of scrolls and leaves.

The Mādhava temple of Madhaba village is one of the great temples of Orissa ; the sculptor has retained many older features of style, such as classic poses, and very little distortion and contortion occurs on the walls ; but he was a master nevertheless, and his architectural work equals some of the best temples of the capital. Here is a temple not only worth visiting, but also deserving much greater care in repair and restoration.*

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* Since writing the above I have been informed that the Government of Orissa have taken steps to improve the temple and the road.

A later date must be given to the Dakshaprajāpati Temple that I discovered accidentally whilst motoring, on one of my exploratory tours, through the town of Banpur, District Puri, (Plate CXXIV). Though the jagamohana is well proportioned, the tower itself is much less well done, a long affair with hardly curving sides, and in no obvious relationship to the prayer-hall. Nevertheless, as the plate shows, the wall of the jagamohana is distinguished by creditable carving, excellent distribution of themes, a rather orderly arrangement of divinities in niches, flanked by floral pilasters in the lower ribbon, and by attractive *chaurī*-bearer girls in the upper. In between there are loving couples and tree-bending maidens, in sinuous poses, with rather large heads. Floral ornaments are exquisite, though tectonic decoration predominates. Though likely to date to the 12th century the Dakshaprajāpati Temple is one of numerous handsome shrines, found almost everywhere inland.

As in many shrines, the figures are covered with plaster (probably *chunam*) and painted in bright colours. Basic colours, yellow, blue and red, are mainly used.

15

The Fulfilment of the Baroque : the Liṅgarāja and the Pārvati

IF there is one temple that in the quality of sculpture and arabesque ornamentation may be considered superior to the Rājarāni, it is the stupendously large Liṅgarāja of Bhubaneshwar. And if it is difficult to fall in love with this truly wonderful masterwork, it is no fault of its creators, the great architects and sculptors who had made this vast pile of beauty and magnificence ; it is the fault of later generations that have had the atrocious bad taste of cluttering up the compound with dozens of ugly structures, many of them worthless and unlovely, preventing a good view of so beautiful a temple as the Liṅgarāja is ; moreover, the temple is set in the middle of filthy and evil reeking bazaars, hemmed in on all sides by structures of the 19th and 20th centuries, with not the slightest attempt on the part of the Bhubaneshwar civic authorities to keep the area either clean or suited to a vast erection of historic, aesthetic and religious value.

The only exception to the ugliness of the numerous accretions within the temple compound is the Pārvatī Temple, a thing not only of great

beauty, but in many respects a typical example of the great originality of the ancient *śilpins* who managed, within the tradition of their era, to create something different and yet harmonious in every temple they erected. And as both the Liṅgarāja and the Pārvatī belong to the self-same period, it is fit that they should be dealt with in one chapter.

The Liṅgarāja, as Dr Panigrahi correctly shows, must have been built during the reigns of Yayāti II (about 1020-1040) and his successor Uddyota Keśari (1040-1065), the last great king of the Somavaṁśī dynasty. It follows that the Liṅgarāja is only slightly later than the Rājarāni or the Brahmeśvara, and that in many ways it bears marked similarity to those two beautiful shrines.

It is, in fact, essentially similar in main outlines, though the ante-chamber or jagamohana, found in the two previous temples also, has been enriched by two more shrines, along the same axis, in the Gaṅgā period ; these bear no comparison in beauty or quality with the main temple, the original jagamohana and vimāna. The Liṅgarāja is at least twice the size of the Rājarāni, if not three times ; its tower is estimated to rise to 180 feet, and the compound (made of laterite, as that of the Brahmeśvara) measures 520 feet by 465 feet. This wall has three entrance gates.

As in many other temples of Orissa, from the Paraśurāmeśvara onwards, there is clear evidence that the jagamohana and the vimāna tower were built separately and are not joined by bonding ; though it is most unlikely that there is any time lag between the building of these two parts. This independent way of constructing the two elements of the Orissan temple again testifies to the high probability of my reasoning that the sudden appearance of the complete Orissan temple, tower and prayer-hall, is due to the combination of two, formerly independent elements, the pillared hall of the Buddhists (still found in the few earliest Hindu temples) with the small sanctum, crowned by a raised spire, also invented by the Buddhists, some time between the 5th and 6th centuries.

The three structures that precede the sanctum are the jagamohana (prayer-hall), the nāṭa-maṇḍira (hall of dance and music) and the bhoga-maṇḍapa (hall of eating). The last two are not only stylistically much later, but are also made of a totally different sandstone.

Because the temple compound is cluttered up with numerous structures of late dates, it is impossible to take a photograph giving any impression of the grandiose scale, the lovely proportions and the magnitude of this beautiful monument. In Plate CXXV as much is shown of the śikhara and the jagamohana (the two original elements of the 12th century construction) as can be seen from any point within the compound, but the photograph can give no idea of the size and the finish of this masterly work. Perhaps some idea of the scale can be visualized if I suggest that

the śikhara is about as high as a ten-storeyed modern building. It is built without any bonding material, stone resting upon stone ; and to make the top of the tower lighter, hollow chambers are constructed within the spire. No one has ever explained how the top stones, some weighing many tons, have been raised, though Dr Panigrahi and many others believe that a ramp was built all the way from the Khandagiri-Udayagiri Hills, more than two miles long. I find it difficult to conceive that craftsmen as skilled as these ancient Oriyas were would have found it beyond their ingenuity to hoist their stones by means of some contraption made of bamboo *staffelage*.

It is when you look at the workmanship and the scheme of decoration in Plate CXXVI that you get a glimpse of the quality of the Liṅgarāja walls ; it is not only the multitude of the ornaments, not only the fantastic quantity of decorative chiselling that strikes you as near-superhuman, but the entire scheme appears to be so perfectly planned, so splendidly organized, so excellently distributed, that it excels even the "Enchanted Forest" of the Rājarāni. Each stone, with its arabesque-decorated edge, emphasized by a shady recess, leads the eye to the next little shrine or compartment in which live, surrounded by this exquisite tracery of floral ornamentation, lovers or gods, teachers or charmers, beautifully ensconced in their well-framed niches, often shaped like a small Orissan temple, crowned by an *amlā*. In the very centre of this picture (Plate CXXVI) a divinity sits in a miniature shrine, holding a thunderbolt ; flanked on both sides by loving couples, one of which cannot be seen here ; the other (seen here) is an enchantingly lovely pair, the girl slender, stretching her arms above her head, the man's hand undoing her jewelled belt. Below the god with the thunderbolt is a small frame holding another pair of lovers ; and the niche that is partly seen below this can be observed much better in the next Plate, CXXVII, in which again a loving couple flanks what seems to be a scene of flying creatures (*vidyādharas* ?) worshipping a female personage, seated. In this plate one can also observe the beauty and variety of the floral ornaments, the creepers and scrolls that give so lovely a texture to the whole wall of the Liṅgarāja. In fact, one would be inclined to rank this rich decoration as rococo, were it not for the fact that the human figures are shown with such exquisite mastery, with none of the exuberance of rococo exaggeration.

Nor does the organisation of space suggest anything as wild and whimsical as rococo can be, with its reckless proliferation of ornament for ornament's sake. What was originally a window with five bars, each bar with a lovely caryatid-like woman, now turned into an entrance by removing two of the upright bars, is seen in Plate CXXVIII ; the admirable organisation of the elements is typical of the high baroque. There is a

fine, agitated but excellently conceived lintel over the window (door), and above it a scene consisting of three handsome *rekhās* or temple-towers, flanked on all sides by four *sundarīs,* or belles. Two elegantly ornate pilasters support the eaves projecting over the entire complex. (The two ugly structures in front, to the left and right, are modern accretions). For a comparison with an undisturbed window, compare this Plate with Plate CXXXIV.

As the Liṅgarāja has hardly ever been properly published—it deserves a complete volume, no doubt—a few more examples of its sculptural treasure follow. In Plate CXXIX I show a small niche with what appears to be a representation of (perhaps Paśupata) teachers. In the upper compartment sits an emaciated, ascetic looking man, with a Brahmanic tuft of hair on his head, expounding, it seems, his teaching to an audience; below are two more seated personages, one with a beard and a tuft, evidently arguing, may be disputing the teaching of the Guru in the upper compartment. The framing of this relievo carving is superb; the quality of the creepers and of the cutting are vastly superior to those on the Konarka temple. On the left that favoured mythological motif of Orissa is seen, the so-called *gajasiṁha,* a lion rearing over an elephant, found on all temples of Bhubaneshwar.

Of the Lords of the Directions I reproduce here one of the most striking, Yama, Lord of the South, Plate CXXX. I own that I have never seen any representation of Yama similar to this highly original work, showing the god seated on his vehicle, the ram. He has a pointed, long beard of unusual shape, a flaming halo, over which hovers a *makara*-head, and surrounded with no less than ten personages, some floating. The moulding of the face is most handsome, and so is the floral framework.

The "additional deities", the *pārśva-devatās,* are three in number, all done in chlorite stone, and all now encased in ugly, modern cubicles. The most handsome of these is the Pārvatī, shown in Plate CXXXI, a beautifully carved, elegantly standing female statue with profuse jewellery, holding a fine lotus, and surrounded by numerous minor personages at the back. Probably a little later in date, this fine work is likely to have been carved towards the end of the 12th century, as suggested by the personal ornaments and the shape of the eyes.

But as most of the sculptural work is not religious but "civil", it is necessary to show here two more examples of the sensuous, characteristically 11th century work found in profusion on the Liṅgarāja.

For it must be emphasized, in the face of any objection by spirituality-seekers, that the majority of the sculptures on the walls of this most sacred shrine of Bhubaneshwar consists of either beautiful and sensuously carved female figures, or of couples in the act of love-making. Coarse

scenes of copulation hardly occur at all ; and, indeed, it would be fair to say that no coarseness occurs even in those scenes in which a frank depiction of love-making is the theme for the artistry with which these scenes are depicted is so exquisite that beauty and charm and grace are the dominating factors, and these lift such sculptures to an aesthetic enjoyment, pure and delightful, lending a quality of nobleness and dignity even to the act of pairing.

This sensuous delight in the beauty of the feminine figure is seen, moreover, in many statues of single woman, *sundarīs* and *alasa-kanyās* of exquisite beauty. Such are the two lovely caryatid-like figures shown in Plate CXXXII, masterpieces in which grace and elegance, those two characteristics of baroque sculpture, dominate. Both are slender women, with narrow waists, not too prominent breasts, and lovely, well-shaped limbs. The girl on the right, stretching in a movement of idle relaxation her arms over her head, stands in the typical thrice-bent pose, resting her weight on one hip ; a smile of contentment and happiness plays round her lips. The right-hand girl, alas, somewhat damaged, seems to form part of a highly stylized piece of vegetation, half tree, half flower, decked with jewellery, and growing out, as it were, of a stylized flower. These are great works of art, in which I can see no element of religion or spirituality, only the praise of beauty.

Equally charming are the two girls in Plate CXXXIII, in which one of the two girls is totally naked, the excuse being that a little monkey pulls off her one and only garment, exposing her buttocks as she steps forward in a lively movement.* The right-hand girl is also in a vigorous movement, touching a flower with her left, raised foot, whilst the tree or plant forms an arch-like ornament round her exquisitely carved figure. In this bold pose little of her attractive body is hidden by a tight-fitting lower garment or her jewellery ; the entire pose is intended to bring out the grace of the feminine body. This is baroque art, *mouvementé*, flamboyant, full of novelty and inventiveness, aimed at delighting the senses.

* * *

The Pārvatī Temple, situated within the sacred precincts of the Liṅgarāja, and slightly to the north of it, is a lovely, handsomely proportioned little shrine, bearing great similarity in workmanship to the Liṅgarāja ; the jagamohana is far more ornate than that of the Rājarāni, and the quality

* The subject is not unknown to contemporary artists elsewhere in India. It occurs, among others, on the Chenna Keśava Temple at Belur, Mysore, only slightly later than the Liṅgarāja.

of the ornamental devices such as creepers and floral scrolls, is slightly less perfect than on the Liṅgarāja.

In Plate CXXXIV a great deal of the jagamohana, as well as a portion of the vimāna, can be seen. There is a complete window on the side of the prayer-hall, with five upright bars, each with a *sundarī* as a kind of caryatid ; between these uprights there are slits through which air and light get into the temple. The carving of the girls is very beautiful, showing no exaggeratedly bent poses there is an elephant frieze for a lintel, and each roof slab or *piḍhā* carries an ornament on its edge greatly resembling that on the Liṅgarāja. This little known temple, datable to about 1100 A.D. or so, deserves far more attention than it has received so far.

16

The Sun Temple of Konarka

WHEN describing the Rājarāni I alluded to the importance of the situation of a temple; and so I did, when writing of the depressing ugliness in the midst of which the beautiful Lingarāja is positioned. It is worth our while to remember that all works of art depend much on the situation in which they are viewed. A superb painting of Raphael is not quite the same when you view it in a crowded gallery, jostled by many other paintings, or when, on the contrary, you see it in the church for which Raphael had painted it. Much of the overwhelming beauty of the Parthenon is due to the fantastically apt and lovely position in which it stands, high on a hill, above Athens.

The Sun Temple of Konarka would be a matter for wonder anywhere; but in its fantastic loneliness on the sands of the seashore the impact of this vast and splendid structure is breath-taking, and the visitor's first reaction—as well as his last—is that there are few monuments in the world comparable to it. Standing, in its ruinous state, lonely and

deserted, among the barren dunes of the sea, one is reminded of Shelley's words

> "Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair !
> Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
> Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
> The lone and level sands stretch far away."

The huge spire over the vimāna has collapsed. It must have been tremendous. It is calculated that it stood almost 70 metres high (about 225 ft.),* and this may be compared with the spire of the Paraśurāmeśvara which is 38 ft. high, or the Rājarāni which is 63 feet. The spire collapsed within sailing memory, and to prevent the collapse of the gigantic, empty prayer chamber (the jagamohana), a British official ordered it to be stowed up with sand, from bottom to ceiling. Removing this, and reinforcing the seven hundred year old structure is a task that would baffle almost any architect, and would cost a fabulous sum. No doubt, it will be done one day.

As it is, this jagamohana now stands, beautiful and rich, in the form of of a gigantic chariot of the Sun, with vast wheels, drawn by the Seven Horses of Sūrya, the Sun-god ; a few paces in front of the horses rises the nāṭa-maṇḍir, roofless, but otherwise in excellent condition, a hall for music and dancing, covered with thousands of figures of dancing and music-playing girls carved out of the stone.

On the parapets of the pyramidal roof of the jagamohana or prayer-room rise huge, free-standing figures of celestial musician-girls, playing drums and flutes and cymbals and strings, and accompanying the chariot of the Sun with their music on its daily course. These heavenly nymphs are among the finest works of art ever produced in the history of Indian art. (Plates CXXXV to CL).

In many ways it is a matter for wonder that at so late a date, the middle of the 13th century, Orissan artists and artisans should have been capable of producing such a stunning masterpiece. For the 13th century marked, in every way, the decline of great art, and one may safely assert that nothing comparable to the Sun Temple of Konarka has been produced anywhere in India at that time, let alone in Orissa. The exuberance of the Hoysala rococo at Belur and Halebid, the monstrously overdrawn sculpture pillars in South India, the almost sickly striving after stunning effect and the grossly over-decorated shrines of the 12th century show everywhere the decline in taste, the end of great baroque art, with its

* It might have been 230 ft. The spire of the Liṅgarāja is half that, 127 ft.

superb sensitivity for ornamental values, for grace, beauty and charm. In its place comes the sheer, senseless desire for ornamentation, the ornament killing the design, weakening the strength of the composition, effeminating the human body which now becomes a mere carrier of jewels and scrolls and ornate work.

On that basis alone, Konarka is a kind of miracle, a last kick, as it were, of a great baroque art, after which nothing but death can follow. Indeed, the hand of this death can already be felt at Konarka, and a careful observer can see the first signs of this moribund decline, notwithstanding the stupendous achievements of a few marvellous artists.

First of all, size and profusion the dramatic element so much loved by the baroque artist is evident in the size. Size, as I have emphasized before, is of no merit by itself ; yet in the baroque period, when the artist searches for surprise, for stunning effect, for overwhelming you with novelty, the spire gradually rises higher and higher, and in this belief of grandiose proportions one can sense the typical decline from true and valid artistic merit towards the theatricality of stupendous size. The spire of the Sun Temple at Konarka was about three times higher than that of the Rājarāni a characteristic element of false values. "Bigger and bigger, more and more !" is the cry of the late baroque artist, whether in the monstrously carved thousand-pillared halls of Madras or in the sky-scraping tower of Konarka.

Simultaneously, the ground plan of the temple outline became more and more complicated. The straight lines of the early Paraśurāmeśvara gives way to the involved plan of the Rājarāni, with 84 corners for the sanctum and 44 for the jagamohana. By the time we reach Konarka, these protuberating and recessing angles increase to many hundreds multiplication and complication delight the late baroque artist.

The sculptural decoration of the Konarka temple fits clearly into this pattern of taste. First of all, you have the surprise element, unknown before, of turning an entire temple into a Sun chariot a novelty, a dramatic innovation.*

And then, the sculptural decoration of the Konarka Temple, that expresses this delight in endless riches, vast variety, enormous multitude, great originality, novel effects, sensuous themes. You have here everything, from peace and agriculture, to war and struggle, men, women and children, an almost endless variety of animals, from elephants (the title of the king was *Gajapati*, "Lord of the Elephants") to a giraffe (evidently brought by some trader from Africa), monkeys and horses and lions and deer and birds and cattle and crocodiles, saints and profligates, sinners and holy

* There are a few slightly similar examples in South India.

men, courtesans and courtiers, warriors and curd-sellers, fantastic creatures such as horses with wings, monsters that are half lion and half elephant, men and women kissing and bussing and the endless riches of a good and varied life, not forgetting dance and music and priests and monks.

The plan is grandiose, and the surviving parts of the temple are among the world's most impressive, most moving monuments. I pity anyone who can only spend a few hours at Konarka. The spell of this endless rhapsody of sculpture is so great that the visitor is unable to view the work with a critical eye.

And yet, whether it is true that 1200 workmen* did the carving or not, it is obvious after closer examination that the quality of the sculpture varies greatly with so many hands at work, this is exactly what one might expect. More than that, a great deal of the carving is declining, late baroque, though a few superb geniuses were also at work. These various "hands" are of utmost interest to us, and we shall now examine the main categories of sculptural work.

(1) The standing image of Sūrya, the Sun-god was the main cult image (there is a second Sūrya image, seated on a horse, rather clumsily half emerging from the background). For the main cult image, see Plate CXLVIII. This statue is made of chlorite, greyish-green, close-grained, and completely different from the rest of the temple. Since I have first written about this difference in style, in *MARG*, XII, 1 December, 1958, I have somewhat changed my opinion. I now accept Dr Mayadhar Mansinha's suggestion that the image probably comes from about 100 miles away, from the Nilgiri Hills of Orissa (not to be confounded with the Nilgiris of South India), where I have found some superb Buddhist sculpture of the late period. One of these is illustrated in this book, the lovely Tārā of Ajudhya, near Balasore, Plate LXI. It is thus still obvious, as I thought in 1958 that the Sūrya does not belong to the main body of Konarka sculpture, but comes from a distant place, made of a different stone and made by different hands. My original suggestion, vaguely made, that it "may be Khiching, Mayurbhanj, or some limitrope area" should now be corrected, as the Nilgiris and their Buddhist carvers are far more likely to be responsible for it.

The stiffness of the god is in marked contrast to the baroque sinuousness of most of the sculpture on the Sun Temple. Perhaps there was some hieratic reason to depict the Sun-god in this lifeless, stiff posture; for the additional figures show much more life and flexion, and some at least of the flying female figures are full of grace. The temple-like shrines that are seen on both sides of the god's knees are typical of the period;

* The figure must be taken as legendary.

so are the long eye-slits that suggest 12th century, and the elaborate bejewelled loops that hang from the belt. The high jack-boots are unknown to Orissan gods, but are typical of this god, whose Iranian-Turanian origins have long been established all later Sun-god images have these western type boots, and most of them have floating ribbons behind their head, a characteristic of Iranian art, in evidence in this image too. The seven horses are as unnatural and ill drawn as the larger horses in front of the Sun Temple, except that those on the temple are ludicrously small in size. I draw the Reader's attention to the two personages kneeling at the feet of Sūrya they must be the donor and his wife, absorbed in a gesture of adoration, raising their eyes to the Lord of the Sun ; and there is, to be sure, a great probability that they are meant to represent King Narasiṁha and his queen.

The whole carving is marked by almost ivory-like precision and hard lines, quite impossible to attain on any but this type of close-grained stone. But it must come from some other workshop than the mass of the sculpture, and it lacks the zest of life, the buoyancy, the vivacity and the sensuousness of the other work. Compare this "hand" with Plate CXLI.

(2) Again very different hands were at work on the reliefs that cover the whole *lower portion* of the jagamohana or hall of prayer, including the wheels and the vast mass of relievo sculpture arranged in two tiers or ribbons running round the base of the main temple. (Plates CXXXIX, CXL, CXLI, all from the jagamohana side). Most of this is hackwork, with little inspiration, done by many, less skilful hands, with a great deal of repetition. Admittedly there are some lovely exceptions, such as the lone lady under the tree, middle compartment, lower ribbon, in Plate CXXXIX, or the rather ill-fed, thin curd-seller, Plate CXLI, central niche, who carries his two pots hanging from a pole on his shoulders—exactly as they do it to this very day. But if you observe the two loving couples in embrace in the same Plate, you will find the heads far too large for the bodies, and the posture, especially of the left side couple, awkward. Even the lotus bases on which they stand are crooked and ill-carved—though the floral ornament is, on the whole, well done. A little examination of the chequer-board pattern at the back will disclose a good deal of careless and irregular work. Some of the scenes in royal courts are well done, as in Plate CXXXIX, middle of the top ribbon, where a prince is seen in audience under a well rendered timber pavilion. But if you compare the seductive young ladies, bending their handsome bodies in the *tribhaṅga* posture, with those lovelies on the Rājarāni, the difference in equality is at once obvious. A large number of lesser artists of the guild were busy with this lower portion of the temple.

(3) Higher up on the walls of the main temple there are a few erotic

scenes, much larger in size than those on the base dealt with in the previous paragraph ; some of them are almost life-size as one approaches the parapet. These lovers are the creations of a vastly superior sculptor, all of them probably by one and the same master, with an exquisite feel for the male and the female body, carved with relish, with inspiration, occasionally with passion. Although they deal with sex in the frankest fashion, the sculptural quality is so exquisite that the sensitive spectator forgets the subject and is left with nothing but admiration for the sheer beauty of the carving and the splendid composition. Many of these bodies exhibit one element common with the best similar sculpture at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh there is a tendency to elongate the lower limbs, a brilliant device to emphasize the tension of lovers in passionate embrace. I illustrate here only one of these sculptures from Konarka, in Plate CXLII, a tender kiss, half hidden in a recess.

(4) No one can be in any doubt that the greatest master at work on the Konarka temple was the creator of the free-standing life-size images on the parapet of the roof, the magnificent celestial musician girls that stand, four-square as it were, with their vast, Maillolesque bodies, huge masses of limbs, and great, rounded breasts, to accompany with flute and cymbal, drum and strings, the procession of the Sun Chariot through the day. They are not only masterpieces as far as Orissa goes, but there has never been anything remotely resembling them in the whole of Indian art. These are not the slender-waisted, thin-limbed graces of the canonic ideal of Indian girlhood a vastly original mind has been here at work to whom the solid mass of feminine flesh and the imposing forms of well-developed womanhood appealed. Plate CXLIII shows one of the most complete figures, with a tremendous-sized coif, the feet stamping the rhythm ; Plate CXLIV is almost superhuman in its powerful masses, with enormous, bulbous breasts and huge limbs ; Plate CXLV shows the sculptor's complete and total departure from the customary ideal of Indian feminine figures and his bold love for enormous bulk, marvellously rendered, with the relish of a Rubens ; and Plate CXLVI shows a flautist girl, her silhouette standing out powerfully against the sky in which she exists.

The fact in itself that they are all free-standing, carved in the round, is miraculous enough. As I have expounded elsewhere, all Indian sculpture is essentially surface sculpture, relievo work, however *alto relievo,* coming out of a background wall, more the conception of a pictor than of a sculptor. That brief period, perhaps about a hundred years, during the emperor Aśoka's days and shortly afterwards, say in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C., when the newly introduced art of stone-carving caught on, and for some time we had yaksha and yakshiṇī figures carved in the round, is rapidly discarded when Indian art strides into its own domain. And

thus we have, all through the remaining centuries, hardly any free-standing images, carved in the round. Images live in and come out of the walls of caves and stūpas and temples, part of the structure to which they belong. No one in India wanted to see the back side of the gods; and the only exceptions are small, portable images, such as the bronzes, or a few, rare examples when the position so demanded, as in the case of the Naṇḍi. In the whole history of Orissa, *e.g.*, there is not one example of a free-standing image in the round, except these musiciennes of Konarka.

These celestial musician girls stand alone in their tri-dimensional vastness, visible from a great distance, outlined against the sky in which they have their existence the work of an artist of vision, of great plastic imagination, and of superb mastery. They bear no kinship to any of the hundreds of female figures on the Konarka temple; not even to the relievo figures standing just behind them, discussed in the next paragraph.

(5) How different the stylistical approach was of the various artists who worked on the Sun Temple, notwithstanding their common love for baroque solutions, is best seen by observing the few relief carvings that stand behind these celestial musicians, on the same parapet, but carved out of the wall behind them. I only illustrate one of these in this book (see for another illustration my article in *MARG*, XII, 1 December, 1958, p. 40) in my Plate CXLVII. On this wall one meets, at intervals, low-carved relievo panels showing figures of fairies, dryads or apsaras, done by a very fine artist, but one who believed in the charm of slender-waisted, lean-limbed girls—as against the sculptor of the musician girls on the parapet, whose feminine ideal was the large, well-built, strong-bodied, Rubensian woman, with prominent breasts. These tree-nymphs on the wall relievos are gracefully elongated damsels, with bodies in sinuous curves, sometimes almost like cork-screws, looking languorously at you, stretching a gentle arm to touch a branch of a tree, offering the milk of a beautifully shaped breast, or (as in the other example published in *MARG*) touching her *pudenda* sensuous depictions of feminine beauty, not the tremendous bodies of the musician girls absorbed in their music-making. Though not as exquisite as the earlier work on the Rājarāni (*c.* 1000 A.D.) or the Liṅgarāja (*c.* 1050 A.D.) at Bhubaneshwar, these charmers of Konarka are obviously descendant of the graceful girls of the earlier baroque of the Ekāmra country.

(6) On the whole, with honourable exceptions, the most inferior workmanship of all Konarka is found in the carvings of the *nāṭa-manḍir* or *nāṭya-manḍapa* (Plates CXXXVI, CXXXVII and CXXXVIII). I am assured by my friend, Pandit Sadasiva Ratha Sharma of Bhubaneshwar that the dancing poses depicted on these walls correspond exactly to the

poses enumerated in their treatise on Orissi dancing entitled *Saṅgīta-darpaṇa* ("A Mirror of Music"). Though I have seen a palm-leaf manus-script of this treatise, with incized illustrations, I have had no occasion to check all the poses. Surely, this would be a most worthwhile task.

Be that as it may, the carving on the whole is poor, the heads being far too big for most of the bodies, and some of the arms and hands out of proportion. In Plate CXXXVIII, a lovely view of the upright pillar that once held the roof, now missing, we have a splendid design showing, from left to right, a tree-nymph, a priest holding a rosary, and a monk with a characteristic stick. Now the head of the girl and of the priest go into the body 4½ times (the right proportion ought to be at least six) and that of the rightmost figure, the monk, only 3½ times, giving thus a mons-trously large head to the body. Or let us observe another detail of care-less workmanship : the two bases under the composite animals, a kind of *gaja-siṁha* ("elephant-and-lion") are not on the same level, one being higher than the other. One ought to add that the general impression is, neverthe-less, splendid, for the overall design is lovely, reminiscent of saints in niches in Gothic cathedrals ; but that inferior hands carried out the actual work, cannot be denied. A sample of this neglect of detail can be seen in Plate CXXXVII, in which, among entrancingly graceful girls, dancing or playing musical instruments, we have a clumsy fault in the girl seen forth from the left, bottom row, whose two legs are twisted in the most awkward way. As the general impression of this richly carved wall is so lovely, it is necessary to draw attention to examples of late and declining standards of execution, here and there. That the overall idea was stupen-dous, can best be seen in Plate CXXXVI, where on the bottom part of the Hall of Dance no less than sixty figures are seen, some in niches, some dancing, some playing instruments, and all this surrounded by a veritable maze of decorative devices.

(7) One could continue to distinguish various "hands", different sculp-tors' work, in so vast a pile, obviously the work of hundreds of craftsmen ; but I wish to draw attention to the animal figures of which thousands occur over temple and the Hall of Dance. Many of the elephant friezes are exquisite ; on the other hand, the horses that are supposed to draw the entire temple, this Chariot of the Sun, are among the most puny and un-happy creations, almost ludicrously out of proportion to the chariot or its wheels.

On the other hand, the two free-standing monolithic statues of a war elephant and a war horse (Plates CXLIX and CL) are among the finest works of art, even in the present, dilapidated condition. The gigantic elephant is seen, I believe, throwing an enemy soldier whom it had lifted up in its trunk ; the ponderous, pachydermatous creature is frighteningly

well shown, though not with "realism", as some commentators thought; for realism does not go with creative art, and certainly is alien to baroque. This is a stylized, creative work, full of an expression of awe for this huge, prehistoric beast, with as great an emphasis on volume as in the case of the lovely celestial musician girls on the parapet.

This strong stress on power, force, violence, is even better shown in the terrific war charger (Plate CL), that tramples, snorting and violent, on a prostrate enemy; its tail is swinging with excitement, its foreward stride has far more vigour than that of the ponderous elephant, and the great legs, with their emphasis on volume, suggest again a comparison with the huge thighs and limbs of the musician girls on the parapet. Even the head is exaggerated, to give more force to the snorting beast, held back with difficulty by the groom.

Much could be written on the technical wonder that so great a stone, or for that matter, all the huge stones of this vast temple, could be transported to this desert spot, supposed to have stood on a river called Chandrabhaga, near a sea-port; or on the subject of the fantastically pure and up to entirely unrusted steel girders that must be counted among the technical marvels of the age. However, this book is on art history, and we are interested in style and attitudes and tastes more than on technical and mechanical expertise.

I do not think there is any reason to be surprised that there should be so much difference in the quality and standard of various carvings, when there were, if not 1200, certainly hundreds of artisans at work on this complex. Neither should it be forgotten that the period during which the Sun Temple at Konarka was erected (perhaps 1230 to 1250 A.D.) marks the very end of a period of fluorescence, the heyday of the Orissan baroque, and stands, as it were, a sentinel on the threshold of a period of long decline. In the whole of India, the fourteenth century brings no great works of art, anywhere, except perhaps in South India (the bronzes) but elsewhere the 13th century brings in the cycle of the rococo and universal deterioration.

The miracle is rather that at such a late period Konarka could still produce a few great masters, such as the Master of the Celestial Musiciennes, the Master of the Mithuna Couples on the top of the temple, or the Master of the War Charger.

Indeed, it is not mass and multitude alone, not the quantity of floral and geometric ornamentation, not the exuberance of thousands of human and animal figures, that are in evidence on the Sūrya Temple at Konarka there were still some great sculptors at work, last descendants of a great line of Orissan masters, who had created some of the finest works of art in the preceding centuries, from Ratnagiri to the Baitāl Deul, from the Paraśurāmeśvara to the Rājarāni and from the Brahmeśvara to the Liṅgarāja.

17

The Last Phases

SEVERAL times during the course of this book the author has been forced to depart from a strictly chronological treatment, as when he had to deal with Buddhist remains of later days, only to return to somewhat earlier Hindu temples, and that in order to follow the systematic development of temple forms. However, on the whole a fairly logical sequence has been kept up, and I must now apologize for this chapter which, unhappily, has to be a hotch-potch of odds and ends, mostly of later days. As will be seen, the bulk of this chapter will deal, nevertheless, with monuments and remnants of art of no mean interest of the post-Konarka period.

And yet, we have a few isolated specimens of earlier days that might have been inserted in earlier chapters but were kept over for this. Among these I would like to start with a superb early piece, probably of the period between 700 and 800 A.D., but inserted in a much, much later temple. This is the grill window of stone now in the Kapileśvara temple in Bhubaneshwar. (Plate CLI).

This most unusual piece of work which bears great resemblance only to one window, and that on the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple, is now embedded in a wall that bears an Oriya inscription dated to Saṁvat 1273, corresponding to 1866 A.D., erected by someone during the "rule" of one Divyasiṁhadeva of Puri. There can be, however, no doubt that it is only slightly later

than the Paraśurāmeśvara, with the obvious distinction, observed also by Dr Panigrahi, that the Kapileśvara specimen is far superior to the clumsy (though interesting) carving on the window of the Paraśurāmeśvara.

What, however, previous research workers, Percy Brown and even Dr Panigrahi, have not observed, a tremendous interest attaches to this scene of dancing inasmuch as *all the personages wear masks.* Whilst this is not very clear in every case in the photograph, some of it can be well enough seen, and an inspection *in situ* made me convinced that even the three topmost figures, the only ones seated, wear facial masks ; the three vigorously dancing performers in the middle row have masks with fangs on their mouths, and what I take to be tinsel crowns, reminiscent somewhat of the large crowns of present-day Kathakali dancers. Equally clear in the original is that the cymbalist and the three flautists and (?) drummer are all, undoubtedly, in masks—an amazing document of some ancient form of dancing not known to survive in this shape to the present day.*

The carving is full of life and variety, and one is not fancying things when one discovers elements of Orissi classical dance movements in the three performers in the centre. A splendid presentation for a window, with small holes cunningly fitted behind the personages to allow light into the temple. The border decoration is closely related to similar decorative borders on both the Baitāl Deul and the Paraśurāmeśvara. A date near 700 A.D. would be justified on that basis, but the lively movement suggests greater baroque skill than was available in the 8th century.

The following few specimens are all early sculptures inserted into later shrines, and worshipped under various modern names.

The superbly carved image of a Mahāyāna Buddhist deity seen in Plate CLII must have come from the ruins of the Ratnagiri monastery or its near neighbourhood. It is now standing inserted into a miserable modern shrine, only the top part being genuine, the arms from the armlets downwards being modern cement work, as is also the stomach and below. The top portion suggests a Dhyāni Buddha, and the exquisite finish of the face, the highly ornate crown, jewellery and falling locks all hint at an early baroque finish. The perfect (and not elongated) slit of the eye excludes a later date, and, lacking more evidence this magnificent sculpture could have been created any time between 650 and 750 A.D. It is obvious that it should be a protected monument, and removed to the Bhubaneshwar Museum, against some inducement and replacement to compensate the priests who had established its present worship (as Matsya Avatār).

Both Plates CLIII and CLIV stand in the neighbouring hill of Lalitagiri, erected in a modern temple that cannot date more than fity or sixty

* I am assured that the masks of the Chau-dancers of Seraikela are only a century old.

years. Hence the arches, which are, to be sure, modern. The sculptures must have been found on the Lalitagiri hill, next to the Ratnagiri, and the modern shrine is now called "Landa Hill" shrine.

Plate CLIII shows an elegantly swaying Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi ("lotus-in-hand") with some attendant figures, including one flying godling, a *vidyādhara* on the top left corner. The other *vidyādhara*, on the right, is weather-worn. The slender and elegant figure of the Bodhisattva is highly sensitively carved, with great love of the swaying line, though the elongated eye-slit and the bulging white of the eye indicate a later date. Flames surround the entire halo, the jewellery is profuse, and a date of after 750 would not be very late.

The violently stepping militant goddess (probably Tārā Aparājitā) shown in Plate CLIV is again embedded in the same modern temple, and shows the similarity of late Mahāyāna images with those of the contemporary pantheon of the Hindus. A small and rather clumsily introduced little figure holds a monstrous rod, at the end of which there is a comically small umbrella ; the goddess, like another Durgā, stamps violently on crouching, defeated dwarfs, and the treatment of the drapery is the characteristic of the so-called "wet drapery" of the post-classic times. The right arm and the left hand seem both modern "repairs". The rest is not only highly skilled but shows an element of vigour and power rarely seen in Mahāyāna Buddhist images. I suggest a date between 750 and 800 A.D., specially in view of the bulging eye and the very thick lower lip.

The next plate shows again old images now re-erected in a modern structure. In Plate CLV I show the two goddesses Gaṅgā and Yamunā, which, as is known, flanked later temple doors where, in older days, we had guardians (*dvārapālas* and *dvārapālīs*). At Khiching, in Mayurbhanj, an antiquity-loving Maharaja had an entire temple erected, almost wholly of the ruins of old temples ; this has been done skilfully, even if not expertly, and stands now just outside the Museum in which many valuable finds of Buddhist times are collected (compare Plate LVII in this book).

The Gaṅgā and Yamunā both show some kinship with Pāla and Sena sculpture, the origins of which have been traced back, by some research workers, to these early carvings of Mayurbhanj. Be that as it may, and the evidence is slender, the graceful elegance and the conscious striving after charm are combined in these two relievo statutes with a love of ornamentalism, the latter also evidenced in many decorative details on this reconstructed temple. The moulding of the feminine bodies is sensitive as well as sensuous, and we have on both faces the seductive smile so characteristic of the late baroque of Orissa. The resemblance of some of this work to the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs at Hirapur is obvious enough ;

and though a later date is not impossible, it is patently a work not before the 9th century, perhaps the 10th. The floral ornament under the feet of the goddess on the left is very much like on the Rājarāni or the Liṅgarāja, but I discern some stylistical difference between the art of the Ekāmra country and Mayurbhanj.

I would like to emphasize here the need of further research at Mayurbhanj. True, some fine pioneering work was done during the times of Maharaja, but even a few days' stay convinced me that there remains great scope for further excavation. At one spot, not a stone's throw from the Khiching Museum I found ancient Buddhist brick foundations only superficially examined, and obviously well worth further digging. Nor has the style and provenance of the hard blackstone sculptures been sufficiently well explored, and as it seems to form a link between Orissan and Pāla-Sena sculpture, it would be of great interest to find out more about it. This mingling of late Mahāyāna Buddhist elements with Brahmanic work is a crucial period that demands more thought.

To this commingling of the two elements belongs the fascinating sculpture of Durgā Mahishāsura-mardinī, the goddess Durgā as slayer of the Buffalo Demon, incorporated in the same reconstructed temple at Khiching, and seen in Plate CLVI. A lively and vigorous piece of carving, it shows the goddess with four pairs of arms, with a beautifully carved body, fine breasts and navel, and stabbing the Demon Buffalo with a sword. Parts of that sword as well as several other missing portions of the sculpture are rather clumsily restored by white plaster work, and an incongruous iron rod has been inserted to hold up the arm with the shield. The face has a lively smile, the appearance of the goddess is majestic, and I do not see any element that would suggest a date much later than the 9th century.

Already in Chapter 3 I mentioned the considerable period during which Jainas continued to create images in Orissa ; even if their output, with the exception of the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves, is not comparable to that of the Buddhists, isolated Jaina images can be found scattered here and there in many parts of Orissa. Few of the later images are of great artistic merit Jaina art became the most formal, the most abstract, the most rigid of all Indian art in later days, with an attitude of "beauty-is-in-the-eyes-of-the-beholder" quite unknown to both Buddhist and Brahmanic sculpture of those periods. Particularly this is true of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras or Holy Men, whose statues are rigid, lifeless and purely formalistic. In fact, often the attendant figurines have far more liveliness and style, and allow us to give a date where otherwise the central, dominating figure of the Tīrthaṅkara could not help us.

Such an example is shown in my Plate CLVII, a statue now standing in the open air in a dusty street of Ajudhya village, near Balasore town.

There are no Jainas in Ajudhya, I was told, and the image is revered by the local Hindus as a Hindu god. The stiff and lifeless Tīrthaṅkara image, in front of the Serpent, would be undatable by itself. Happily the attendant figures are carved with much more skill and vivacity, especially the top *vidyādharas* and the two little personages at the base. These seem to me to be typical work of excellent baroque times, in exquisite poses and much grace ; so that it is highly probable that the carving is not later than the 9th century, especially as the eye-slits are not elongated at all.

A much later date has to be ascribed to the strange modern temple, built up from old ruins at Saintala, halfway between Bolangir and Titilagarh. This odd and incongruously reconstructed temple stands on a conspicuous mound that is obviously asking to be excavated, for it must contain many more remains of a ruined temple of, probably, the 11th century A.D. The date is tentative, and should be corrected after further research.

It seems to me that the present temple entrance, seen in my Plate CLVIII, is a composition of not one, but two ancient doorways, for the two larger figures on the outer sides do not seem to fit in at all with the door posts that flank the actual entrance. All the fragments here seen are marked by tumultuous and crowded composition, with numerous men, women and animals, all in lively gesticulation and vigorous movement. The two larger attendant figures on the outer right and left uprights are handsomely carved, though disproportionately large by any standard.

Inside the odd little shrine, hardly a finished work by any means, stand scattered about a small image of Durgā and three *sundarī* images. All these suggest a date of the 11th century.

Here again is a case of great need of further excavation, as in so many other sites of Orissa before firm conclusions can be reached.

Brick Temples

Brick, as I have emphasized before, was the dominant building material of the Buddhists ; this was replaced to a considerable extent by stone masonry and carved stone work by the Brahmanic builders. Nevertheless, brick was not altogether discarded, and we have the strange beauty of a small brick shrine within the holy precincts of the gigantic stone temple of the Sun at Konarka. If it was rarely used, it must have been due to two major reasons first, the easy availability of stone, and second, the fact that stone was so eminently suited to relievo carving, so much favoured by Hindu temple builders.

The two rare and striking examples of pure brick structures that now follow must be reckoned as exceptional attempts to create novel forms ; there may have been, to be sure, many more brick shrines, but brick not

being as lasting a material as stone, and easily carried away once it collapses, it is quite likely that many brick shrines have been converted into private houses.

Surely the most surprising of all is the tremendous brick śikhara temple, standing on the vast stone outcrop, a very short distance from the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs at Ranipur-Jharial. The entire temple is seen in Plate CLIX, with a stone-revetted entrance that might well be later, a superb piece of technical achievement, in amazing condition if you think of the thousand years it has witnessed. It appears that the spire is solid ; or, if it is not solid, it is almost so, with perhaps a narrow passage somewhere in the centre.

A view of the flank is seen in Plate CLX. Not only is the work entirely of brick, but even the sculptured pieces within the chaitya windows are moulded and fired brickwork ; and, presumably, the niches that are now empty, held *pārśva-devatās,* flanking gods, made of moulded and oven-fired brickwork. As most of these are missing, it is difficult to base a dating on the style of the sculpture ; but what little is left, as well as the architectural detail, suggest a date of the 10th century or a little later. The loftiness of the spire would hint at a date in the 11th century ; but neither the ground plan, nor the only slight complication of the facets support a date beyond the Rājarāni, for the general ground plan is rather simple, and the number of extrusions and insets is not very large. I cannot imagine what the pieces of stone scattered about near the base could have served for. A stone *amalakā* is most unlikely, and the entrance door looks patently an afterthought and is ill fitting. There are more than a hundred temples near the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs, mainly belonging to this period they are all made of stone, small votive shrines, dwarfed by this mighty brick temple.

We enter a completely different world with the brick temple of Rasikarāya at Haripada, District Mayurbhanj, about 14 miles from Baripada town (Plates CLXI, CLXII, CLXIII and CLXIV). This is an all-brick temple with a curvilinear, dome-crowned roof, erected shortly after the year 1575, and is the only specimen of its kind I know of.

Some comparison with brick temples in Bengal spring to the mind. A number of these have been discovered, some well published, but hardly any go back to a period earlier than the 17th or 18th century. Percy Brown has already drawn attention to an 18th century brick temple with curvilinear roof at Vishnupur, in his *Indian Architecture*, Vol, I, p. 188,* (his Plate CXVIII), but which differs rather conspicuously from our Rasikarāya in the surface decoration, full of Bankura's skilled terracotta

* The reference is to the first edition.

work. The curvilinear roof, nevertheless, is a strong point of contact, and distinguishes this type of temple from the "Orissan Temple" design basically.

As far as I can discern, though the shrine is now in a rather dilapidated condition, the Rasikarāya of Haripada was originally not covered fully with relievo decoration, and most of the old raised tile work is still seen ; but it seems to me that the entire wall was covered with mural painting. Distinct signs of painting could be found in a large number of places when I visited the site, and inside the shrine the evidence for a large mural painting is quite obvious, however far it has disappeared. The building is square in outline, with a single entrance. The entire temple can be seen in my Plate CLXI, with its double curvilinear roof, forming a kind of bent dome on the top ; and the entrance door, with a true arch gateway, is well seen in Plate CLXII. This door was surrounded by ornate brickwork of which some portions are still visible ; it is well done, and obviously depended for its effect to a great degree on the tinting of the tiles. Blues, reds and yellows are still seen in patches.

The four corners of the building feature a kind of octagonally shaped pilaster, one of the best preserved portions of which is seen in Plate CLXIII. It will be seen that the sculptural panels were all cast in a mould, a kind of negative ; whilst the decorative devices, borders and the like, were also made in moulds, and a number of identical tiles were cast of each ; these decorative tiles occur on various parts of the temple, and are on the whole very well done, both floral ornaments and "tassel-and-fringe" type borders. Very few of the figurative panels can be seen well enough to judge of the quality of modelling, but their kinship to such terracotta panels as those on the Buddhist temple at Paharpur or the 19th century Bankura shrines is evident.

The best preserved of these figurative or illustrative tiles are at the very base of the temple, half covered by the surrounding grass, so that taking a photograph without first clearing the growth is not easy. Nevertheless, a fair glimpse can be caught from my picture in Plate CLXIV which shows an ambitious row of sculptured friezes, all pre-moulded in brick and then fired in a kiln. At the very base are scenes from a court or *darbar,* it seems, and though much weathered, they display no mean skill and liveliness. Even more vigorous is the upper ribbon of carvings in which mighty and violent scenes of a war (perhaps the *Mahābhārata* or some local battle) appear to be commemorated. As this land must have belonged to the Maharajas of Mayurbhanj in the 16th century, it is not impossible that a battle scene against Islamic invaders is commemorated. This certainly is one more site that deserves closer study, especially as adjoining the shrine under discussion there are ruins of a fortified palace. Considering how

little we know of 16th century architecture in Orissa (especially in brick), this asks for further excavation, clearing and research.

Wooden Temples

Considering how much Indian building must have been in timber—and every book on Indian art history refers to it—it is both a wonder and a matter for regret that so little has been found out about the subject. The brilliant reconstructions by Percy Brown are among the finest conjectural restorations; and some work has been done on the wooden shrines of Kerala, especially the Palace of Padmanābhapuram, and the circular shrines of which noteworthy information is found in Miss Stella Kramrisch's, Dr Cousens' and Mr Poduval's various publications. There has been very little work on timber structures in the Himalayan hills, as in Chamba (Dr Hermann Goetz), and as far as I know, nothing so far about Orissa.

I am, therefore, happy to add a little information about a few survivals of timber temples or *maṇḍapas* in Orissa. These must be distinctly separated from wooden temple chariots, which are universal in the whole of Inḍia, and about which our knowledge has greatly increased lately.

One of the three timber shrines I have been fortunate enough to discover is a masterly piece of work, continuing what must be a very ancient tradition, for there are here obvious echoes of Buddhist scrollwork, rows of geese (*hansas*) that occur as early as the time of Aśoka as well as lotus devices astonishingly like those on the earliest railings of Buddhist stūpas in the 1st century B.C. That such a monument ought to be carefully preserved and chemically treated, must be obvious to all lovers of antiquity.

This *maṇḍapa* or open pavilion is in the small hamlet of Purushottamapura, in the District of Ganjam, about 25 miles from Chhatrapur, and stands in front of the Kapileśvara Temple. Its present state is very good; the carving is superb; the construction is evidently the result of thousands of years of experience and skill.

Plate CLXV gives a general impression of the structure of the pavilion. It is a square, open construction, four mighty timber pillars supporting the four corners of the roof, which is built up, tier by tier, in a pyramidal fashion, crowned on top by a square-shaped *cassetta* in the form of a complete lotus flower, from the centre of which hangs what is called in architectural terminology a "drop", a suspended ornament [Cp. Plate CLXIX (a) for the drop]. All the long beams that run along an entire length of any of the four sides are richly covered with carved friezes; whilst every beam is locked to the other by inserted panels at equal distances; with the exception of a few repairs that are now bare, these connecting panels have each one or more figures carved in low relief of gods,

goddesses and heroes. In the lower ranks there are also "drops" between any two of these panels.

Plate CLXVI gives a detail that shows the admirable quality of these wood carvings. There is Gaja-Lakshmī (Lakshmī with two elephants in the two top corners) in the centre; the rest of the beam is a superbly executed carving of geese in a row, with what seems to be a calf breaking the monotony of the goose-frieze (there are quite a number of cattle on other sides of this frieze). If this frieze of *hansas* is reminiscent of early Buddhist stone carving, the floral ornament below the geese and the two ribbons above are masterly works of ornamental design, in no way inferior to much similar work done, *e.g.* at Ajanta.

Better examples of the upright panels can be seen in Plate CLXVII, in which lotuses, scrollwork and lathe-turned pillars separate the carved panels. The individual panels are full of life and variety, including an archer (? Rāma), a seated god with a flute that must be Kṛishṇa, and a divine personage with a halo, seated "at ease",* with a leg drawn up. The style of the carving, considering that this must have been the work of rather simple masters, suggests hardly any clumsiness, and one would be inclined to date the timber work of the Kapileśvara at Purushottamapura to the 18th or even the 17th century. This is the date suggested by what little can be observed of the faces, with rather elongated and bulging eyes; and there is at least one figure of a man wearing what appears to be a Mughal *jama* coat. This personage can be seen in Plate CLXVIII, in a panel next to the central lotus flower, top left, second figure from top edge. This latter plate gives a good impression of the ceiling, looking up straight, with all the elaborate decorative devices and the numerous mythological panels between beams.

In Plate CLXIX two details complete the picture of this admirably constructed and impressively carved timber roof in (*a*) the top of the ceiling can be seen with the 'drop' which is a succession of lotus leaves; and in (*b*) there is a splendid example of a detail from a decoratively ornate panel, with admirable floral ornament, interrupted by two medallions, one with a highly stylized peacock of exceptional excellence, and the other lotus roundel, for all practical purposes entirely unchanged from the times of Bharhut or Sanchi, 2nd century B.C. to 1st century A.D. A marvellous survival of traditional craftsmanship, with a strong hint at the kind of wooden structures that must have preceded the stone monuments of post-Aśoka times.

Finally, the timber temple of Birañji-Nārāyaṇa or Birañchi-Nārāyaṇa (probably *Viriñchi-Nārāyaṇa*) at Buguda, near Aska and Bhanjanagar,

* *Lalitāsana.*

built by the father of the present *mahāpātra,* whom I have personally met, and watched whilst he was giving a new coat of paint to the carved divinities. The temple is, consequently, from the end of the 19th century, and so are the murals on the plastered outer walls. (Cp. Plate CLXX and next chapter).

It is fascinating to observe how much of the older technique, documented in the Kapileśvara Temple at Purushottamapura, has remained, and how much has changed. We still have the essential constructional element of long wooden beams with ornamental devices, connected by upright panels at intervals, each with a carved god, goddess or hero. The long beams are much less handsomely carved at Buguda than at Purushottamapura, and the uprights are much less skilfully done. In the Buguda temple they have always been painted, and the present writer happened to have visited the temple a second time precisely when Mr Mahapatra junior, son of the creator of these carvings, himself a white-haired old man, was repainting the divine figurines (with modern oil paint, in rather glaring colours). The pillars that support the roof are no more of timber, nor are the walls of the shrine, which are white-washed, painted with scenes of mythology on a large scale, and spoiled by electric wiring that runs across the very faces of the divine personages depicted on the wall.

On the other hand no praise must be spared for the superbly carved timber wall of the Sanctum and its astonishing wooden door, illustrated in Plate CLXXI. The arches are what is usually called, wrongly, Jehāngīrī arches (for they were introduced by Shāh Jehān), *i.e.* cusped arches of typical Islamic appearance. This, however, it must be observed, is the sole novel intrusion ; the rest of the profuse carving carries on centuries old tradition, including the numerous divine images (26 panels on the door wings alone), door guardians (*dvārapālīs*) under the fancy pillars, floral ornaments, including numerous lotus flowers that reach back to 2000 years of Buddhist and Hindu art, and even a *sundarī,* a belle, adjusting her dancing bells in a seductive pose (left bottom niche). There are geese (*hansas*) and flying celestial musicians (*vidyādharas*), and an old-fashioned *makara* or crocodile-mask is depicted at the apex of the central arch. I would call none of this great art, but certainly astonishingly good craftsmanship, difficult to match anywhere in India, with the sole exception of bazaar painting in places like Puri or Calcutta up to the beginning of this century.

18

Votive Figures of Orissa

WE now come to a form of religious art that has never received any recognition from our pundits, though it is the most wide-spread form in this entire subcontinent, and specimens of which can be found from the Himalayas to the southernmost tip of South India, and from the western coast of the country to the Bay of Bengal. For, if you believed our pundits, you would get the impression that Indian religion (and, hence, Indian religious art) is a profoundly metaphysico-philosophical *Weltanschauung,* and every Indian is a kind of minor Śaṅkarāchārya.

I have been fighting this utter falsehood for many years, pointing out that the vast masses of India know nothing of Vedāntic philosophy, of *advaita* or metaphysical speculation, and that the true religion of the countless millions of India is a very simple faith, and their art is rooted in a profound love of this earth, a great *joie de vivre,* which manifests itself best of all in the sheer, exquisite beauty of lovely sculpture and an affirmation of the goodness of life. Whilst ye cannot go deeply in this matter at this place, I must now point out that the most intense form of religious art in the whole of India consists in the *ex-voto* figures that never find a place in your books on Indian religion or Indian art.

Up and down the whole length and breadth of Orissa, during thousands and thousands of miles of travelling, I found these votive images deposited

under Sacred Trees, in every district, almost in every village, on the road-side, outside villages, inside villages. Called variously *mātā-ghoṛās* (The Mother's Horses) or Ṭhākurāṇīs (the word Ṭhākurāṇī might best be translated by 'Our Lady'),* these figurines, ranging from a few inches to as much as three feet (one metre) in height, are made by the village potter of fired potter's clay, or, more rarely, of brass, copper or other mixtures of metal. The large majority of them are, indeed, highly stylized figurines of horses ; but there are plenty of elephants too in Orissa (not, to my knowledge, in other States). This might be due to the fact that Orissa had always an abundance of elephants, and all the major rulers (and many a lesser raja) called themselves "gajapati", "Lord of the Elephants".

These votive horses and elephants are deposited under a tree known to be the dwelling place of the Goddess ; and we are back here to a pre-Aryan belief in tree-goddesses, accepted and adopted by the later religions, and depicted in tens of thousands of images and reliefs showing *vṛikshakās,* dryads and tree-nymphs. You have met them in numerous examples on the temples of Orissa through all the centuries, from the Jaina caves near Bhubaneshwar, through Buddhist images all over the State, and in hundreds of representations on the temples of Orissa.

In one of the villages of Orissa I have been given a lucid explanation of the purpose of this votive figurine by a village elder, and I consider it necessary and useful to repeat his words.

"Suppose the daughter of the house is ill. We want to invoke the aid of the Mother, and ask Her to come and help us. Surely, you cannot expect the Mother to come on foot to visit you. Hence we go and deposit a horse under Her tree ; She will make use of it at dead of night, will by Her magic powers come and ride to our house, and give us Her help and cure the daughter."

And so it is with drought and with rain and with loss of property and fear of trouble depositing an animal figurine as a vehicle for the Mother Goddess is the safe way to obtain help—not unlike the faith in some other countries where many people are known to offer candles for a favour asked.

Under some of the majestic trees that house the Goddess the figurines run into thousands ; you can see broken, collapsed and powdered forms, deposited perhaps a hundred or more years ago, the whole area littered with ancient *ex-voto* figures, hundreds more standing under the leaf crown. The lovely picture, taken in the middle of a jungle in Plate CLXXII is a wayside place of offering, at a village called Duarseni, near Bangripusi, 24 miles from Baripada town. The thatched hut is for the priest who

* Ṭhākur is a lord or master it is the correct form of Tagore.

comes occasionally, and extracts his fee from the faithful. None of the images here deposited, not even the highest elephant with howdah, is as much as one metre high ; many of them are admirable works of folk art, little gems of the potter's hand. The vast majority are horses, highly stylized. Similar figurines are deposited before the two prehistoric Nāga and Nāginī images shown in Plate III, at Kapilprasad, both now worshipped as the Mother Goddess, though one is a male figure.

A better and nearer view of this category of potter's art is seen in Plate CLXXIII, in which two horses and two elephants of terra-cotta are shown. The little white flowers deposited on the heads of three animals show that these are recent offerings and still worshipped. The charm and beauty of this idiosyncratic folk art deserves a whole book, for the variety of forms shows an inventiveness a little of which can be seen even in the two pictures here reproduced.

How wide-spread and how deeply rooted the worship of Our Lady of the Tree is, is best proved by examining Plate CLXXIV. This is a picture of a Muslim Pir's or Holy Man's grave in Kantapara village, District Puri, perhaps some 30 miles or so from Bhubaneshwar, with numerous votive horses in terra-cotta on the grave and all around it. It is hard to believe that a Muslim saint's grave would be adorned with images of animals, and I took a long time to believe it ; but after four visits, during which I have been assured by large numbers of villagers that it was, indeed, the burial place of a Muslim saint, I had no alternative but to accept the fact. These are the "grass roots" ; we are back here to the most ancient faith ; new beliefs and new religions come and get superimposed and receive due respect but the oldest beliefs do not vanish. It will be seen that the area around the grave is full of broken and old clay horses this worship has been going on for many generations, at Kantapara as at hundreds of other villages of Orissa.

19

Painting in Orissa

EVER since the pages of the *Introduction* to this book, and in many passages after those, this author had to complain of ignorance, absence of previous research, and lack of sufficient data. It is, nevertheless, with some little satisfaction that he can look back upon the previous 18 chapters, in which he has managed, here and there, to bring order into the chaos, show the gradual development of forms and the shaping of styles, and piece together a consecutive and in many ways logically evolving history of art. Little as these achievements are, considering how much work is left to be done before an authoritative history of Orissan art can be completed, there are many facts in the previous parts of this book that will stand the scrutiny of time and scholarly research, and certain lines of evolution of art forms in this study possess an inherent logic and justification.

No such claim is possible about the history of Orissan painting. The author wishes to make it clear that he could, after years of research, make neither head nor tail of this chapter, and that he is completely baffled by the contradictory facts, few as they are. For facts there are hardly any ; dated paintings are almost non-existent ; a stylistic evolution cannot be discerned ; and, in fact, the writer has come to the sad conclusion that some of the most often reproduced and renowned pieces of so-called Orissa paintings may never have been painted in this State.

With such a failure of positive results, this chapter is more justified by the questions thrown up than by the answers offered. And precisely because these problems are rather clearly defined here, they may form the basis of further research, and clear the ground of doubtful assignations. It must also be of some value for future researchers to publish here a number of pictures that have never before been printed, with some reasonable conclusions.

We may clear the ground, first of all, by emphasizing the various categories of painting that Orissa has been producing.

First, there are mural paintings in some temples.

Second, there are numerous illustrations on palm-leaf manuscripts incized with a stylus, pure linework.

Third, there are illustrations incized with a stylus on palm-leaf, as under category the Second, but enriched with tints (sometimes only with one tint).

Fourth, the wooden boards that serve as covers and hold the palm-leaves together, have frequently pictorial representations, greatly differing from the incized types under categories the Second and the Third, painted in bold colour work, and obviously related to the *paṭas* (cloth paintings) of Puri as well as the illustrations in the next category.

Fifth, paper illustrations, usually in manuscripts but not exclusively, painted in vivid colours, and stylistically closely related to the *paṭa* paintings of Puri.

Sixth, the cloth paintings of Puri, and the entirely identical stylistic work on the round playing cards of Orissa called *ganjīfa.*

Seventh, the wall paintings on houses in villages and towns, essentially similar to categories the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, though with marked changes due to size and material and background.

Eighth, odds and ends of paper paintings, claimed to have been done in Orissa but which do not fit at all into any of the known Orissan categories.

A careful examination of the above eight categories can bring us to a reduction to *two main manners, both* of which can be claimed to be *characteristically Orissan,* though both have a great deal of kinship with ancient Gujarati illuminations, once called Jaina miniature paintings. This kinship must be emphasized, as Prof. O. C. Gangoly emphatically denies any parallelism between Orissan paintings and other forms of painting in India or Europe in an article in which he tries, bravely but unsuccessfully to unravel some of the mysteries of Orissan painting (*MARG,* VIII, 4 September, 1955, pp. 47ff). It is to his credit that he equally emphatically deplores our ignorance of the subject.

The fact, however, is clear that the two main styles or manners that one can discern in all these forms are distinct and are partly due to func-

tional reasons, the use of materials that have their own limitations *one is the pure linework,* determined by the need to use a stylus to incize lines in very small palm-leaf sheets ;* and *the other is the much bolder brush-work, invariably in brilliant, gem-like colours,* that are used in today's *paṭa* work, and have been used with very small changes, essentially identically, on wooden book covers, on paper illuminations, on cloth paintings and, with slightly more marked differences, on walls.

And when this distinction is made, we must hastily add that even the second category, the bold colour work, depends largely on the outlines on which the linear drawings of the stylus-workers built up their skill. There is simplification in the linework once colours are used, but the schematic treatment of eyes, lips, noses, feet, arms *etc.* are almost identical with the untinted linear drawings. I wish to emphasize that these two categories do not include in any way my Category the Eighth, about which I have to say more *infra.*

This schematic treatment of parts of the body, *etc.* is a matter of considerable interest. I have watched present-day artisans at work, and was astonished to see how these ready-made formulae are employed with an almost unbelievable rapidity, the stylus running with utmost ease to form every eye—always the same ; every nose—always the same ; every chin—all the same ; and every limb—in whatever position, always identically drawn, with the same, few, economic and sweeping lines. There will be small differences in personal ornaments, in hair-dress, in background design, in the pattern of dress (Saris have come in since the 19th century, before that all women were shown with bare breasts), and other accoutrements and objects but even those travel within rather narrow limits, traditional elements being supreme at the present day.

As Prof. O. C. Gangoly correctly states, these manuscripts "are very difficult to photograph" unless filled in with coal-dust or ink. However, something of the character of these incized illuminations can be seen in my Plate CLXXV in which I show five leaves of a palm-leaf manuscript, by Lokanātha Dāsa, now in the Raghunandan Library in Puri. They are illustrations of an *Ushā-Parinaya* text, and their date can be roughly guessed from the fact that cusped arches occur in leaves 2 and 3 from the top, which makes it likely that the MS. dates from the 18th, if not the 19th century. None of the women possess blouses, but the end of the sari is draped over their breasts. There is one completely naked woman in leaf 4 from the top, left side, and as she is 'draped' under an element, whom she appears to embrace, it is surmised that she is copulating with the beast. (It may be remarked here, *en passant,* that a very large number

* Horizontal lines are difficult, as the fibres of the palm-leaf tend to split there.

of illustrated manuscripts that I have examined in public and private collections in Orissa, have erotic illustrations).* Our *Ushā-Pariṇaya* also shows a number of male figures, camel drivers and attendants, most of whom wear Mughal *tang-paijamas, i.e.* tight fitting leggings. All these details make it unlikely that this MS. is earlier than the 18th century.

The next illustration in Plate CLXXVI shows four palm-leaves from a *Rāmāyaṇa* manuscript in the collection of Pt Sadashiv Rath Sharma of Puri, who has kindly allowed me their publication. Both in these leaves and others I am not publishing here all the men wear tight Mughal trousers and belted coats, except Rāma and Lakshmaṇa, and many men wear clearly discernible "Marathi" type turbans, which makes it necessary to date the drawings to the 19th century. The structures depicted have often cusped late Mughal arches ; the women possess blouses and drape the sari across the left shoulder. Sītā seems to wear a *ghaghra, cholī* and *oṛhnī,* i.e. skirt, blouse and head-kerchief. All the faces are identical, of men and women, with enormous and bulging eyes, with very few exceptions always from the profile (as in Gujarati miniatures) and the shading of cloth, *etc.* is obtained by either making many dots or hachuring. The women all have enormous rings in their noses. There is a good variety in placing the illustrations with the text (in Oriya characters), now to the left, now in the middle, now to the right.

Now I am convinced that a careful study of these designs would enable a student to establish a chronology especially if it were possible to be sure that some of the manuscripts with illustrations are earlier than the two I am publishing here. The great trouble with manuscripts, however, is, especially in Orissa, that the copyist of the, say, 19th or 20th century would copy the entire text, including the old date of an original palm-leaf manuscripts made any time a hundred or two hundred years earlier. To distinguish such fake dates from genuine dates is a task for which the writer of these lines is not equipped ; a thorough knowledge of Oriya epigraphy and literature is necessary. And once a few milestones have been established, illuminated manuscripts of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, *e.g.,* it will be possible for an art historian to show how the line-work of the artists has been changing through those centuries.

Whilst, then, I have failed to establish such a chronology in the history of incized drawings on palm-leaf manuscripts, there are a few positive points that may be useful for future researchers. Prof. Gangoly does not know of any illustrated manuscript earlier than the 16th century, and the illustrated paper manuscript of the *Dasa-poi* that he refers to (also published by Miss Sudha Bose, in 100 copies only), belongs to the period

* I do not illustrate these in this book.

1761 to 1796 when Damodara Bhañja the poet-king lived. In fact, all the illuminations Prof. Gangoly refers to, as he says himself, belong to the 18th century or later.

I have reasons to believe that hardly any *paper* illustrations or paper manuscripts existed in Orissa before the 18th century; actually, after examining many old manuscripts and many new, I have come to the conclusion that palm-leaves are used to this very day, and that few people used paper even in the 19th century.

In any case the difference between stylus-incized line-drawings and coloured paintings is enormous. They seem to belong to two worlds, even if one recognizes the elements of hieratic drawing, the ready-made formulae for eyes, hands, lips *etc.*, of the line-drawings being re-employed as a basis for painting.

Important indications of a correct date will include the kind of dress the personages wear Mughal clothes for men, a feature I have encountered in almost all the manuscripts I saw, indicate 18th century or later work ;* women appear without blouses, as far as I can see, as late as the early 19th century ; the architectural features, such as the Islamic arch and the cusped arch, all indicate late work. An obviously 19th century structure gives away the date of the two paper pictures which Prof. Gangoly publishes with his above cited article in *MARG* these paintings, though perhaps done in Orissa State, have nothing whatever to do with the style of Orissan palm leaf manuscripts, and belong to an entirely different world. Even Prof. Gangoly discovers some connexion with Rajput painting.

What is, then, one to say about the two extraordinary and very beautiful miniature paintings on paper in the Ashutosh Museum of Calcutta, published by Prof. Dasgupta, Mr Basil Gray (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1948) and again in *The Art of India and Pakistan* (Faber and Faber, 1950), two unique leaves painted in delicate and most un-Orissan tints, with slenderly elongated bodies and faces that bear not the remotest comparison with any other Orissan drawing or painting ? No doubt, Prof. Dasgupta must have obtained these in Orissa ; but they do not fit in with any manner whatever into any Orissan art history, and I hereby express my gravest doubt whether they had ever been painted in Orissa. Prof. Gangoly refers to *"these unique drawings (sic) surviving in only two specimens"*, and the correct answer to that puzzle is that they do not come from the brush of an Orissan painter at all. They were found in the erstwhile Nayagarh State, in South Orissa, and the raja might have

* A lag of time must be posited between fashions in Delhi and Agra on the one hand, and a far-away province such as Orissa on the other.

obtained them from the neighbouring Andhra—or any other place, Bihar, Bengal or Rajasthan.*

Whilst we have a strong and definite Orissan style in the incized line-work drawings of the palm-leaf manuscript, we have an equally powerful local style in the pictures painted in bold colours; unhappily, very few paper paintings of this fascinating style remain, but we have a good number of book-covers, wooden boards that hold the palm-leaves together, and of which the Ashutosh Museum has a fair number, of various dates, published in handsome postcards in colours (*Twelve Coloured Cards of Orissa Paṭa,* University of Calcutta, no date). Here I can also supply some splendid further examples; and here we are on solid ground, a powerful local style that is manifested in cloth painting too, as well as in mural paintings on the walls of houses. In fact, this is the style, still surviving, among Puri *paṭa* painters.

The finest example of an illustrated paper manuscript that I can offer here is a *Gopa-līlā* (perhaps best translatable as "The Pastimes of the Cowherd", i.e. Kṛishṇa) in the collection of the library of the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneshwar. In Plate CLXXVII three typical sheets of this splendid illustrated manuscript are reproduced; and though they are all traditional in theme, the composition is in every case not only full of charm but also excellently organized within the given space.

In Plate CLXXVII(a) the whole, fabulous world of mystic Vṛindāvana is turned into golden yellow; in front runs the Yamunā river, blessed with fish and lotus flowers; in the centre a rich tree spreads out over all the girls, and that naughty rogue, Kṛishṇa sits triumphantly on a fork of two branches, playing his flute, whilst the girls are in despair. Four stand on one side, four on the other, each in a slightly different pose, some praying, some hiding their shame, some covering their breasts, all looking with enormous and beautiful eyes to the Beloved Cowherd; whilst one is attempting to pull him down, by climbing on the trunk. The entire composition is linear, like a frieze; and yet, at the back, the depth is, rather clumsily, shown by distant trees, looking rather hieratic and formal, in clumps of two. And lest, in this fabulous world of gold, you should forget the sky, there is a bluish sky on the top, with odd-looking little clouds, as symbolic and as little realistic as the rest of the landscape. It is a landscape of the mind. And as the girls wear no clothes, there is little evidence for the approximate dating. There is more in another sheet of the self-same manuscript.

Plate CLXXVII(b) shows, against a dream-like blue background, three

* The Raja of Chamba possesses paintings from Delhi, Agra, Lahore and Rajasthan the fact that they are found in Chamba does not prove that they were *painted* there.

cowherds and three milkmaids, all turning towards the left, waiting for Kṛishṇa. All the three cowherd boys have peacock-feathers in their hair, two hold flutes, and all three, holding each other's hands, wear *dhoti*-shaped garments with a sash. Observe that each has a shade of different body-colour, and so have the three milkmaids. The eyebrows and the eyes are beautifully drawn, and there is a wonderful skill in the curvature of the arms ; monotony is avoided by giving each hand and arm a slightly differing design. The three lovely milkmaids, all shorter than the three cowherd boys, all wear a kind of skirt with a sash falling in front down to the edge that went out of fashion shortly before 1800 ; in fact, as the *oṛhnī* or head-kerchief is not tucked into the skirt, the probable date of this painting will be between 1780 and 1800—allowing, nevertheless, a slight lapse of time for a distant State, it may be some twenty years later than that. The typical little pavilion on the right, found so often in 18th and 19th century miniatures, also suggests a date around 1800. The trees are highly stylized and decorative rather than naturalistic ; the fish (all swimming towards the approaching Kṛishṇa) and the strange little, wavy white clouds on the top, are characteristic "shorthand" elements suggesting rather than representing. With all that the drawing of the bodies and the truly enchanting faces testify to a fine artist ; and so does the elegant disposition of tht subject within a well-organized frame.

Though Plate CLXXVII(c) comes from the same manuscript, it seems impossible that the painting was made by the same artist. The faces are quite different, and much less lovely ; the eight milkmaids praying, it seems, for the return of Kṛishṇa, are all drawn in exactly the same movement of their hands, symmetrically arranged on two sides, and though the body-colours are again varied, the clothes, very plain, are repetitive, and have nothing of the variety in their previous picture. The two trees at the two sides are far from lovely. Another hand has been at work here.

What are the dominating characteristics of this outspokenly Orissan style of painting ?

I have already mentioned the essentially *linear* composition, like that of a frieze, with no attempt at depth or *trompe-l'oeil*, deceptive perspective : all the action plays on a single line.

The second important element is the use of plain, unshaded colours. Colours run from black outline to black outline, with only such small exceptions as a vague indication of shading on the edge of the horizon.

Profiles, thirdly, dominate. As will be seen, there are exceptions, especially in the case of gods, or Kṛishṇa, but the basic design is a profile, sharply delineated.

Observe the tendency of exaggerating the size of the chin.

Trees are shown with each leaf separately drawn and tinted. Even when

they are introduced as distant and thickly foliated trees, they are "theoretical" and symbolic trees, with no attempt at naturalism as, e.g. in some Pahārī painting. In fact, these individually foliated trees have something in common with Persian and early Mughal trees.

The river is symbolized by fish, the sky by clouds.

The entire background is dominated by one, large plainly coloured surface, yellow or blue or red (the latter becomes almost universal in the 19th century).

That all this has much in common with Gujarati painting, is obvious.* But there is less formalism and more humanism in Orissan design, nor is there such a love of crowding the whole area of the sheet as in early Gujarati work. In fact, the organization of Orissan sheets is lovely. There is no hustle, no rush, everything is calm and serene. Even in the erotic sheets this gentleness is dominating.

Thus we have derived some knowledge out of these few sheets, little though it is, and we have an approximate date, the most likely being the end of the 18th century, perhaps 1780. This date is offered in due humility, though there are points that make it more than hypothetical. And if similarities with 15th and 16th century Gujarati miniature painting are so strangely preserved, one must remember how isolated Orissa has remained, how little Islamic invasions could have influenced here, and how even in such matters as Orissi dancing the State preserved and still possesses a system of classical dancing that is nearer to ancient *Bhārata Nāṭya Śāstra* standards than the Bharata Natya system practised in South India, where it has undergone further development. The parallel is not irrelevant, it is pertinent a state or country that sticks to ancient tradition in one form of art, may well be expected to hold on to traditional forms in another.

The survival of these antique ideas of art is clearly discernible in the wooden plank covers of manuscripts of which I publish here several formerly unpublished specimens. Generally speaking one can assert that narrow and long covers would be used for palm-leaf manuscripts, whereas broader and shorter planks could be used for manuscripts made of sheets of paper. Unhappily, this will help us little in our dating; for the simple reason that palm-leaf manuscripts are being made up to the present day, and were certainly widely in vogue as late as the 19th century. Whilst this piece of logic leads us, thus, into a *cul-de-sac,* there still is the valid conclusion that *broad and rather short book cover planks cannot be very old,* as it is doubtful whether paper had ever been used for manuscripts in

* Cp. e.g. *The Story of Kālaka,* by W. Norman Brown, Washington, 1933. See e.g. Fig. 13, dated to the middle of the 15th century.

Orissa for more than a couple of centuries. Most evidence is against it, and on that basis alone the manuscript covers here published are not very likely to be very ancient.

The four covers shown in Plate CLXXVIII are all, obviously, intended for paper sheet manuscripts and not for palm-leaf books. They are, therefore, unlikely to be older than the 18th century.

In Plate CLXXVIII (a)1, Kṛishṇa stands on the Yamunā river bank, under an ornate tree cover, playing his flute. On both sides stand two milkmaids, each holding, from left to right, a fly-whisk, a bow, flowers (?) and a hand-fan. The background is bright red, with flowers strewn about, a bird or two hang from the trees. The girls all wear small bodices, and their patterned skirts have a flowing end of a *kamarband* or sash hanging down in front of the whole length of the skirt. This dress alone suggests the end of the 18th century, although something of the kind, with a much broader bottom, appears as early as the 17th century. (Cp. Fabri, *A History of Indian Dress*, Orient Longman, Plate XXIV but much more Plates XXVIII and XXIX, the last of 1790). The drawing of the faces is not very attractive, they are all in full profile, with rather bulging eyes. Yet the general impression is delightful, the colours, especially the brick-red, the yellow and the blue, are excellently used. On the whole, the entire painting is nearer folk art than court art, and might have well been done by a bazaar painter.*

The second book-cover, Plate CLXXVIII (a) 2, is well organized into compartments. The centre has an impressive Serpent divinity, with a tremendous array of serpents' heads forming his halo, and two little personages on top sprinkling milk (?) on him. On the sides we have four other neatly arranged compartments with ornate frames, each holding a divinity, the one in bottom left having a Child Kṛishṇa with a woman, perhaps his mother. The entire design is obviously bazaar work, outstanding in the decorative manner, not in the depiction of the figures. I am unable to suggest any date for this work.

The third book-cover in this Plate, CLXXVIII, is marked (b)1, and shows a Vishṇu Anantaśāyin (lying on the World Snake), though not sleeping but wide awake, attended by quite a number of personages, some very small, on the top left, with Brahma emerging more from Vishṇu's arm than from his navel. As the female figure has a bodice, a date earlier than the 18th century seems doubtful; in fact, the execution suggests again a 19th century work, and that at the bazaar painting level.

But CLXXVIII(b)2 is a different kind of work altogether. Probably

* It is also possible that the Northern Indian distinction between "Court painter" and "Bazaar painter" did not apply to Orissa.

a scene from the *Rāmāyaṇa,* it shows a king and queen seated on a throne, under a royal umbrella, attended on by a number of personages, all three crowned, one holding a bow and a sword, another, of bluish tint, brandishing a hand-fan, and the third with a flywhisk, though also armed with a sword. An animal-headed messenger, not easily identified with a monkey, is addressing the king, and at his feet is what is obviously a monkey with red face, stroking the king's foot. Nārada, the divine messenger, is seen floating above them, with a number of miniature creatures, perhaps *gaṇas*. The background is red ochre, strewn with white flowers.

Now the animal-headed messenger wears a Jahāngīri turban and a Mughal *jama*-coat, and this makes a date into the 17th century possible; however, the queen's blouse is identical with those worn in the 18th century, and I believe an earlier date will not be justified. Nevertheless, this is no more bazaar work or hack-painting; an able artist has been at work here, and the composition and the gestures are excellent. This does not mean that a strong folk element is missing; but then Orissan painting, as Oriya literature, was always near to the people.

Plate CLXXIX shows two more wooden book-covers, both of moderate merit.

The top illustration, Plate CLXXIX(a)1 shows eight divinities in eight identical compartments; their names are inscribed, but it is, artistically speaking, of very little interest, the whole being a rather cheap solution of covering an area. Painting in "compartments" has always been a favourite method of Indian painting, from the earliest murals at Ajanta to the Rajasthani and Pahārī paintings well into the 19th century. However, in a Kangra miniature, to mention one example, a number of personages would be seen in pavilions, under arches, between trees etc., in a variety of movements; here, in this Orissa book-cover they all sit in greatly similar little squares, in very similar attitudes, with hardly any difference between one divinity and the other. Perhaps the most lively one is the Kṛishṇa, the dark-hued god, second from the right, bottom row; and yet the entire book-cover is a rather easy solution, obviously a bazaar work.

Figure (a)2 is a far better piece of work, the composition covers the whole area in a unified conception. The centre figure is Vishṇu, and on both sides there appear to be two royal worshippers, each, apparently, with his queen. It is not easy to identify these 'kings' and 'queens', for though there are umbrellas over the seated personages at the two end, both 'kings' and 'queens' seem to have haloes, and their identity is uncertain. What is clear is that the entire book-cover is painted in the typical *paṭa* style, with a bright crimson background, strewn with flowers, and the colours used are essentially red, black and white (with some extra colour for the *choli* or

blouse of one of the women). It is a veritable feat of skill to use three colours only with such lively effect, however childish the drawing is.

The shapes of these book-covers instantly reveal that they were meant to hold paper manuscripts, not palm-leaves ; the *cholis* also suggest 19th century habit, though the large veil-like garments over the women suggest no known date.

In the next illustration, Plate CLXXIX(b) we come to a very different manner of book illumination. This is an incized and tinted palm-leaf miniature of ambitious riches, and done with no mean skill. We are in a richly wooded country, and this leaf shows a warrior or prince with an elegant beard, fighting in a vigorous movement of attack another warrior, riding a caparisoned charger. This medieval looking knight is accompanied by his shield-bearer (?) or some other (smaller) member of his retinue, whilst behind the knight fighting on foot there are several other (smaller) warriors, including what looks very much like a monkey-fighter, gesticulating in the midst of this flowery country. It is all very ornamental, with exquisite detail that must have cost a lot of time to achieve (without breaking the palm-leaf), especially the marvellously designed flowers. It seems that two tints have been used, pink and bluish-green, both only gently enhancing the value of the drawing.

This is a characteristic example of Court art, with its great delicacy and refinement, differing vastly from the more masculine art of the bazaars, with its bold crimson background. I have seen many manuscripts done in this style, probably all of them from the 18th century, and most of them would be erotic in subject, though by far not all.

And so we come to the best preserved mural painting in a modern temple, the wall paintings of the Viriñchi-Nārāyaṇa Temple at Buguda, near Aska. (Plate CLXXX). I have visited this shrine three times, and gave a description in my previous chapter under the sub-heading *Wooden Temples.* As explained there, I have met personally the son (now an elderly man) of the master who had built and painted this temple, so that we know for sure that the temple was built and painted in the 19th century. It is to the credit of the solid and persistent tradition of art that it is almost impossible to discover the slightest modern or western element in these murals.

The wall-painting shown here in Plate CLXXX is faded, but perhaps less than the other walls, and shows Rāma and Lakshmaṇa on a hill in a rocky landscape, receiving visitors, citizens, holy men and warriors. The faces, the component elements of the faces (eyes, noses, lips, chins etc.) are essentially similar to present-day *paṭa* painting at Puri, only the hues are much softer, pale browns and buffs predominating. Some of the heads might actually belong to a Puri *paṭa* or cloth painting, whilst the ingenious

and symbolic treatment of the hill is so old that its origins can be seen in Ajanta. Similar are the little animals too that inhabit this 'wild countryside' the first examples can be seen in the fantastic rock carving of the Rani Gumpha near Bhubaneshwar, about 150 B.C. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* the more it changes, the more it remains the same old thing.

* * *

And thus in this hesitant chapter on Orissan painting, we have managed, nevertheless, to clarify a few things. We know now that the two main streams, Court painting and bazaar painting, were much nearer to each other in Orissa than in most lands of India ; that the interplay of these two streams was so strong that it is sometimes difficult to say whether a painting is more popular than sophisticated the two have so much in common.

We have also come to the conclusion that those two renowned miniature paintings of delicate hues and elongated bodies, now in the Ashutosh Museum, Calcutta, and coming from the personal collection of the Raja Saheb of Nalagarh, do not resemble any other Orissan painting we know of a fact already alluded to by Prof. Dasgupta. We venture to go a step farther and conclude that they are not the work of Oriya artists.

Much could be written on present-day mural painting (and some has been written, indeed) ; but this author has definitely set out to write a history, and has, therefore to stop somewhere in the 19th century. That is also the reason why not much can be added here about that fascinating hand-painted art, the playing-cards, or *ganjīfa*. Dr R. V. Leyden has already shown that few, if any, go back to a period more than a hundred years old.

But that there must be illustrated palm-leaf manuscripts that can be dated firmly to the 16th or 15th century, seems to me highly probable as in so many other branches of Orissa art history, they need far more study and detailed examination than has been done so far. In principle, it is more than likely, it is certain, that those who carved the masterpieces of sculpture in the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries A.D., must have been able also to limn lovely pictures on their palm-leaf manuscripts.

APPENDIX I

Some Literary Sources of the 64 Yoginis

SEVERAL students before me have commented on the marked discrepancies between literary sources and works of sculptors, especially in the matter of iconography. I myself have several times commented on the irreality of *Silpa-śāstras,* textbooks on arts and crafts, many chapters of which do not seem to have the remotest connexion wih actual works of art. In few matters are the discrepancies so glaring as in the case of the cult of the 64 Yoginīs. The texts seem to have little relation to the same sect or order, they are in total contrast to each other, hardly any of the varied texts giving any but a few identical names. As mentioned above, there are at least 120 names for the 64 Yoginīs in the various texts, and they seem to lead one nowhere.

Apart from the list already given in the text, from the *Skandapurāṇa,* lists of names of the 64 Yoginīs are given in the *Kālikā Purāṇa,* the *Bṛihannāradīya,* the *Piṭhori-vrata-kathā,* the *Bhavishyottara-purāṇa,* etc., and there are inscriptions in the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs at Bheraghat. None of these lists tally.

In Mr V. W. Karambelkar's article on the subject, "Matsyendranātha and his Yoginī Cult", *Indian Historical Quarterly,* Vol. XXXI, pp. 362ff., there are actually 79 names, with 14 missing, which makes 65. It will be seen that a good number of them have the same symbols, and several goddesses have more names than one. *E.g.* Tāpanī can also be read as Jayantī, Jāhā could also be read Ūhā, Deḍḍarī may also be read as Duduri, and Piṅgalā could be identical with Kaumārī.

The "symbols" are not very helpful either. There are two Yoginīs with elephant's heads, two with cow's heads, three ladies have a Garuḍa as a vehicle (Vaishṇavī, Raṇginī and Nīladambarā —*sic*—), and five have a "prostrate man" for a symbol. I leave it to iconographers to disentangle these confusing threads.

That Yoginīs were attendants on Durgā, and, in a sense, were considered to be various forms of the Goddess herself, is well known; but they were originally seven, it is difficult to see how and when (especially,

when ?) did they become 64. That there is a confusion with the Seven Mātṛikās is also clear ; several of these occur in the various lists, but, as far as I can see, *none contain the names of all the Seven Mothers.* There is, to be sure, a possibility of counting Eight Mothers, multiplied by eight attendants, which would tally with 64. But there is not the slightest evidence at hand for this hypothesis, and unless someone can produce some text that proves that each of the eight Mothers possessed eight Yoginīs-in-Waiting, the suggestion remains attractive but unproven.

One might remark, *en passant,* that Indian calculation likes fours, and multiplies of fours ; the rupee was divided into four times four annas, the anna into four paisas, and 8 × 8 is one of the favoured multiples. To mention a few samples Kṛishṇa is hit by 64 arrows in the fight with Rukmi ; in the *Mahābhārata* the Asura Śambara shot 64 arrows at Bhaga the Sun-god ; Karṇa too pierced Bhīma's armour with 64 arrows ; there are 64 *vidyās* or forms of meditation ; there are 64 arts according to Vātsyāyana and the *MhBh*—which by the way, Kṛishṇa managed to learn in 64 days, *etc., etc.**

I personally hardly see any connexion with the Great Mothers, and repeat my hypothesis that the Yoginīs grew out of local *yakshīs* or female godlings, and in the splendid manner in which the Indian mind, ever since the *Rigveda,* could see unity in diversity, and managed to identify any divinity with any other ("Thou, O ...., art the god ...., and Thou art the and the ...."), or made an *avatāra* of Vishṇu out of a Buddha, identified Rāma with Kṛishṇa, and insisted that Kṛishṇa was, really, only another Vishṇu, in this same manner the little local darlings of the people, sprites and fairies, nereids, naiads, orcades and dryads they profoundly believed in, were identified and given a sectarian justification by calling them Yoginīs. This would explain the large number of names, much more than 64, now available in every region they differ because the local names differed.

Both the *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya* and the *Akula-vīra-tantra* denounce, with slightly varying emphasis, acts of worship, external ritual (*i.e.* the rites of the *established* churches, in place of which they wish to put their own local godlings and practices). What a follower must do is to rouse the *śaktis,* and one way of doing this is the *Yoginī-melana,* a term that can hardly be translated any other way than "copulation with the Yoginī" In Chapter 8 of the *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya* it is made clear that all the eight ways of attaining *vidyā* (knowledge) come from associating with Yoginīs, "externally and internally".

* Mr Prabhu is an ardent collector of things running into 64 which he connects with the 64 dark days of the Arctic long night.

Prof. Shashibhusan Dasgupta could be quoted at length to enlighten one on the possible practices of this order. On p. 37 of his book* he says "When Nirvāṇa was thus identified with a state of supreme bliss, the attainment of an absolute state of supreme bliss was accepted to be the *summum bonum* of life by all the Tantric Buddhists. For the realisation of such a state of supreme bliss they adopted a course of sexo-yogic practice. This conception of Mahā-sukha is the central point round which all the esoteric practices of the Tantric Buddhists grew and developed." On p. 135 he emphasises that "... to the Vaishṇava Sahajiās ... the doctrines of the cult are fundamentally the same as are found in the Hindu Tantras as well as the Buddhist Tantras."

From these few references little concrete results can be deduced, except the highly probable conclusion that *the Yoginī cult practices were so secret that they have remained effectively hidden from our generation.*

One ventures to conjecture that the practitioners of this order or cult had every reason to be secretive about their activities, for they were much like the erotic orgies of the Kaula-Kapālika sects—and one should not be accused of reading more into the texts than is strictly warranted. But what could be the meaning of *Yoginī-melana,* "union with the Yoginī" ? Tantric literature is outspoken on the subject of the importance of copulation as a means of attaining bliss ; and the *Kaula-jñāna-nirṇaya* promises equanimity and freedom from all sin to those who cultivate Sahaja. Nothing could be more explicit.

The erotic sculpture, so unintelligible to some people, follows logically on the temple walls of the subsequent centuries, an eloquent illustration of the value attached to Love as a means towards happiness.

* *

The following is the list of the Sixty-four Yoginīs at Bheraghat, as recorded in Mr Karambelkar's article, with a few minor changes :

Name	Symbol	Remarks
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2. Ajitā	lion	
3. Chaṇḍikā	prostrate man	probably a Mātṛikā
4. Mānadā	a lotus	
5. Kāmadā	the *yonī*	
6. Brahmāṇī	a goose	one of the Mātṛikās

* *Obscure Religious Cults,* Calcutta University, 1946.

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* *Obscure Religious Cults,* Calcutta University, 1946.

	Name	*Symbol*	*Remarks*
7.	Maheśvarī	a bull	one of the Mātṛikās
8.	Taṅkārī	a lion	six-armed
9.	Tāpanī, or Jayantī	a horse	
10.	Haṁsā	flowers	attribute a vīṇā
11.	Raṇājirā	elephant	
12.	Not known	a serpent	
13.	Haṁsinī	a goose	four-armed
14.	Īśvarī	a bull	four-armed. Mātṛikā
15.	Sthāṇvī	hill peak	four-armed. Mātṛikā
16.	Indrajālī	elephant	four-armed. Cp. Indrāṇī, no. 42 in this list
17.	Not known	bull & skeleton	
18.	Ṭhakiṇī	a camel	four-armed
19.	Phaṇendrī	prostrate man	
20.	Uttālā	a bull	
21.	Lapatā	bird-faced tortoise	
22.	Jāhā or Ūhā	peacock	perhaps Sarasvatī ?
23.	Ritsamādā	bear	
24.	Gāndhārī	horse	four-armed, with wings
25.	Jāhnavī	crocodile	four-armed
26.	Ḍākiṇī	man & skeleton	clad in lion-skin
27.	Baṅdhanī	a man	
28.	Darpahārī	a lion	lion-headed, wears a garland of skulls
29.	Vaishṇavī	Garuḍa	sits on a Garuḍa. One of the Mātṛikās
30.	Raṅginī	Garuḍa	
31.	Rūpiṇī	a crocodile	
32.	Śākinī	a vulture	
33.	Ghanṭālī	a bell	
34.	Ḍhaḍḍharī	elephant	elephant-headed
35.	Jaṅghinī	a bull	
36.	Bhīshaṇī	prostrate man	four-armed
37.	Śatanu Saṁvarā	a horse	four-armed
38.	Gahanī	a ram	four-armed
39.	Varāhī	a bear	or should it be a boar ? A Mātṛikā
40.	Nālinī	a bull	with a cow's head

	Name	*Symbol*	*Remarks*
41.	Nādinī	a lion	
42.	Indrāṇī	elephant	one of the Mātṛikās. See also no. 16 in this list
43.	Erurī	a cow	with a cow's head
44.	Śaṇḍinī	a donkey	
45.	Eṅginī	man with elephant's head	elephant-headed
46.	Teraṁvā	bear	
47.	Teraṇṭā	Mahishāsura	20-armed
48.	Pārvatī	prostrate man	10-armed
49.	Vāyuvena	antelope	
50.	Abheravardanī	bird	
51.	Sarvatomukhī	a lotus	three heads and 12 arms
52.	Maṅdodarī	two men worshipping	
53.	Khemukhī	long-beaked bird	
54.	Jāmbavī	bear	
55.	Audārā	a naked man	
56.	Sthirachittā	man with folded hands	
57.	Yamunā	turtle	
58.	Bibhatsā	skeleton & a prostrate man	
59.	Siṁhānanā	lion-headed man	similar to Narasiṁhī, the Matṛikā
60.	Nīladaṁbarā	Garuḍa	
61.	Antakārī	a bull	
62.	Piṅgalā	a peacock	perhaps Kaumārī ?
63.	Akkhalā	two men worshipping	
64.	Vīrendrī	horse's head & prostrate man	four hands & sword
65.	Kshatradharmiṇī	elephant	four-armed, with garland of skulls
66.	Riḍhālidevī	animal with claws	

As will be seen the list has 66 and not 64 Yoginīs. Among the anomalies

one can pick out the fact that Pārvatī, the goddess, Shiva's consort, is listed as a Yoginī, and that on a prostrate man; that far from 64 Yoginīs being identical with the Dākinīs, we have one single Yoginī listed here under no. 26 with that name; also that the goddess Yamunā is among the Yoginīs, tortoise and all, but not her counterpart, Gaṅgā. A number of these names may be wrongly spelt, and some of the combinations are unintelligible to me. I have hardly corrected any, except those where it was too obvious, *e.g.* Sthirachittā I changed into °chittā.

A comparison with the *Skandapurāṇa* list will show that there is hardly any resemblance between the two lists; the identical names are Varāhī (spelled in the *SkP*. Vārāhī), Tāpanī and, perhaps, the Antramālinī of the *SkP*. is the same as the Mālinī of the Bheraghat list. That leaves about 62 names totally different in the Bheraghat temple of the 64 Yoginīs, of which we possess 66 names.

APPENDIX II

THE STORY OF THE WITCH KALARATRI

THE most fantastic piece of evidence I have found so far about the Yoginīs, and one that I do not see mentioned anywhere, is in a story of Somadeva's *Kathā-sarit-sāgara,* probably nearer to the exact practices of the Yoginī-cult than any other so far quoted. It concerns the witch or Yoginī ("witch" is one of the dictionary translations of the Sanskrit word *Yoginī*) called Kālarātri.

Now Kālarātri is given as one of the 64 names in the *Piṭhori-kathā-vratā,* verse 32, so that there can be no doubt that we have here to do with a genuine identification with at least one Yoginī in the list of the 64 Yoginīs.

In the *Story of Phālabhuti* in the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* we have an elaborate description of the practices of this witch Kālarātri, and I shall quote here a few relevant passages in the excellent translation by C. H. Tawney

"One day that King Ādityaprabha returned from hunting in the forest, and quickly entered his harem ; his suspicions were aroused by the confusion of the warders, and when he entered, he saw the queen named Kuvalayāvalī engaged in worshipping the gods, stark naked, with her hair standing on end, and her eyes half closed, with a large patch of red lead upon her forehead, with her lips trembling in muttering charms, in the midst of a great circle strewed with various coloured powders, after offering a horrible oblation of blood, (alcoholic) spirits and human flesh. She for her part, when the king entered, in her confusion seized her garments, and when questioned by him immediately answered, after craving pardon for what she had done 'I have gone through this ceremony in order that you might obtain prosperity, and now, my lord, listen to the way in which I learnt these rites, and the secret of my magic skill."

Here follows a description of how she was advised, as an unmarried young girl to pray for obtaining a good husband to an image of the god Gaṇeśa in a certain pleasure-garden. Kuvalayāvalī then continues

"I went, my husband, and worshipped an image of Gaṇeśa that stood in a lonely part of the garden, and after I had finished the worship, I

suddenly saw that those companions of mine had flown up by their own power and were disporting themselves in the fields of the air; when I saw that, out of curiosity I called them and made them come down from the heaven, and when I asked them about the nature of their magic power, they immediately gave me this answer 'These are the magic powers of witches' spells, and they are due to the eating of human flesh, and our teacher in this is a Brahman woman known by the name of Kālarātri.' When my companions said this to me, I, being desirous of acquiring the power of a woman that can fly in the air, but afraid of eating human flesh, was for a time in a state of hesitation; then, eager to possess that power, I said to those friends of mine: 'Cause me also to be instructed in this science.' And immediately they went and brought in accordance with my request, Kālarātri, who was of repulsive appearance. Her eyebrows met, she had dull eyes, a depressed flat nose, large cheeks, widely parted lips, projecting teeth, a long neck, pendulous breasts, a large belly, and broad expanded feet. She appeared as if the creator had made her as a specimen of his skill in producing ugliness. When I fell at her feet, after bathing and worshipping Gaṇeśa, she made me take off my clothes and perform, standing in a circle, a horrible ceremony in honour of Śiva in his terrific form, and after she had sprinkled me with water, she gave me various spells known to her, and human flesh to eat that had been offered in sacrifice to the gods; so, after I had eaten man's flesh and had received the various spells, I immediately flew up, naked as I was, into the heaven with my friends, and after I had amused myself, I descended from the heaven by command of my teacher, and I, the princess, went to my own apartments. Thus even in my girlhood I became one of the society of witches, and in our meetings we devoured the bodies of many men."

From the above it may be concluded that the "society of witches" were the Yoginī-*kula*; and it is, perhaps, necessary to add, for modern readers, the remark that every single person who had heard or read this tale in olden days in the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara,* firmly believed not only in the existence of witches and witchcraft but must have felt convinced that such spells existed, and that the eating of human flesh gave supernatural powers to the adherents of this sect. After all, two hundred years ago the vast majority of Europeans still believed in witchcraft too, and the story of the Salem witchhunt is not so very old either.

This little piece of information is, as far as I know, the only text giving a hint of what the 64 Yoginīs were standing for.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

amlā, āmalaka disc-shaped fluted architectural member, used as a crowning element in *śikhara and piḍā deul.*

anuratha-paga : the pilaster next to the *kanika-paga* in a *pañcha-ratha* or *sapta-ratha* temples.

bāḍa : wall ; portion between the base and *gaṇḍi* of a temple.

bāndhanā a set of mouldings dividing the *jāṅgha* into two halves.

baraṇḍa : a set of mouldings forming the topmost portion of *bāḍa.*

baroque style characterized by freedom of line and inclination towards unusual, elaborate and decorative effect ; ornate without the excesses of ths *rococo.*

beki cylindrical portion between the top of the *gaṇḍi* and *amlā* in a *śikhara* temple and between the top of the *gaṇḍi* and *ghaṇṭā* in a *piḍā deul.*

bho ornamental motif to decorate a temple.

bhoga-maṇḍapa hall of offering ; the structure in front of the *nāta-mandira.*

bhūmi horizontal planes into which the body of a temple is divided from base upwards.

chaityā-window : horse shoe-shaped window characteristic of Buddhist *chaitya* hall, but found on Hindu temples also as ornamental motif.

gaṇḍi superstructure between the *bāḍa* and *mastaka ;* convex carved spire in a *śikhara* temple, pyramidal in a *piḍā deul.*

garbha-gṛiha cella in which the image is placed.

ghaṇṭā : bell-shaped member of *mastaka* in *piḍā deul ;* placed on *beki.*

gopura : entrance gateway of *drāviḍa* temple developed into a lofty, tapering tower with concave curved outline.

jagomohana : the structure in front of *garbha-gṛiha,* usually a *piḍā deul.*

jali : perforated screen, lattice work.

jāṅgha the vertical portion between *pābhāga* and *baraṇḍā; tala jāṅgha* : portion of the wall above *pābhāga* and below *bāndhanā ; upar jāṅgha* : portion above bāndhanā and below *baraṇḍa.*

kalasa : pitcher-shaped finial of a temple above *khapuri.*

kanika-paga segment at the corner of a temple which is externally divided into three or more *rathas* (see *ratha*).

khākharā a type of superstructure which is "rectangular parallelopiped with vertical sides replaced by an open S-form" (Bose, 1932).

khapuri : a flattened element of the *mastaka* remaining between the *amlā* and the *kalasa.*

maṇḍapa : hall for assemblage.

mastaka : uppermost part in *śikhara* and *piḍā deul* above the *gaṇḍi.*

mukha-śāla hall in front of the rekha, usually a *piḍā deul.*

nāṭa-mandira or *natya-mandapa* hall of dance and music in front of the *jagamohana*; usually *a piḍā deul.*

nava-ratha : see *ratha.*

pābhāga a set of mouldings carved at the lower part of the *bāḍā.*

paga "segments produced upon face of temple by producing part of it to a more forward plane." (Bose, 1932).

pañchāyatana five-shrined complex consisting of a central main shrine and four smaller shrines at the four corners.

pañcha-ratha : see *ratha.*

piḍā deul : sloping sections of a *piḍā* roof, which is designed in a pyramidal form.

rāhā-paga : central pilaster of a temple, the exterior of which is divided into three or more segments.

ratha "segment produced on the outer face of a temple which has been subjected to projection. *tri-ratha* : temple with a central exterior projection, the latter dividing the wall into three *rathas,* the two on the outer sides being on the same plane. Temples with five, seven and nine such *rathas,* the result of the increase in projections on each face, are respectively known as *pañcha-ratha, sapta-ratha* and *nava-ratha.*" (Mitra, 1961).

rathaka miniature *ratha ; paga.*

rekha deul an order of temple characterized by a convex carved tower.

rococo : highly ornate style, in which ornament is so overrich that it weakens or kills the design ; affected and overelaborate ornamentation.

sapta-ratha : see *ratha.*

Sikhara : see *rekha deul.*

Silpin : architect, sculptor, artist.

tri-ratha : see *ratha.*

vimāna : the structure enclosing cella, hence the most important part in a temple complex.

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INDEX

PLATE I



The Bhāskareśvara Temple at Bhubaneshwar. A unique temple in two storeys, apparently built round a broken Aśoka-pillar of large dimensions, worshipped now as a Śiva-linga. In and around the mound on which it is built, were found fragments of an ancient Buddhist sandstone railing.

PLATE II



Buddhist railing post, sandstone, with a wood-nymph (Vṛikśhakā) and two centicular sockets to take the crossbars (Sūchī). Found in the mound of the Bhāskareśvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar. Now in the Orissa State Museum.



A serpent goddess (nāginī, left) and a serpent king (nāgarāja, right), in a shed in Kapilprasád village, about 3km from Bhubaneshwar. Both are being worshipped now as the Mother Goddess (Thākurānī). Blackstone.



PLATE III (a)

Yaksha.*

Found at Bhubaneshwar.

Marked "*C.* 1st Century B.C",
but much older.

Height 5′1″.

Yellowish Soft Sandstone.

*or Gama ?



PLATE IV

The Yaksha of Dumduma.
From a village near Khandagiri
(Bhubaneswar). Now in the
Orissa State Museum.



(1)
Yakshī
at the entrance to the Jayabijaya cave,
Udayagiri (near Bhubaneshwar).
Rock-cut. About 150 B.C.
On top:
floating godlings, probably
vidyādharas.

(2)



Rock-cut relievo showing adoration of a sacred tree in a railing, inside the Jayabijaya cave, Udayagiri. About 150 B.C.



PLATE VI

Udayagiri, Rani-Gumpha : the right hand cubicle on the lower floor, with jungle scene, and door guardian with a long stick.

PLATE VII

Lower Storey, Rani-Gumpha, Udayagiri, Bhubaneshwar : a danseuse performs in front of a pavilion, accompanied by an orchestra of four musicians.

150 B. C. or earlier.



Two mud huts with bent bamboo doors and thatched roofs : typical civil architecture in the 1st-2nd century B. C. Detail from a rock-cut relievo at Rani-Gumpha, Udayagiri.

PLATE IX



Rani-Gumpha, Udayagiri : One of the relievo rock carvings in the verandah, showing amazon fighting a male warrior, and (right) being abducted after defeat.



The Story of the Winged Deer.

Rock-cut carving in the verandah of the Rani-Gumpha, Udayagiri, top storey,
(Cp. next plate for detail).

PLATE XI



The nymph of the tree (Vrikshakā) protects the winged deer. Detail from the rock carving shown in previous plate.



Central Asian in high boots and long mantle, carrying broad sword, carved in the rock on the upper floor of the Rani-Gumpha : 1st-2nd Century A.D.



The Taming on a Elephant ?
Rock cut frieze in the vestibule of the Ganesh Gumpha, Udayagiri.
1st Century B.C.

PLATE XIV



The Taming of an Elephant ?
Similar to the previous plate, in the upper verandh of the Rani-Gumpha at Udayagiri.
1st Century A. D.

PLATE XV



Two 4th century images found some sixty years ago and set up in a modern shrine at Ganiapalli village, Sambalpur District, Bargarh Subdivision. They have been mended in a clumsy way with cement by a village artisan. On the left, the First Sermon of the Buddha in the Deer Park, Sarnath ; on the right, the Muchalinda Buddha.



The *Shivji Mandir* at Mahadevpalli village, near Laida, Dist. Sambalpur. Two courses of ancient Buddhist bricks alternate with one course of stone masonary. The porch is modern.

PLATE XVII



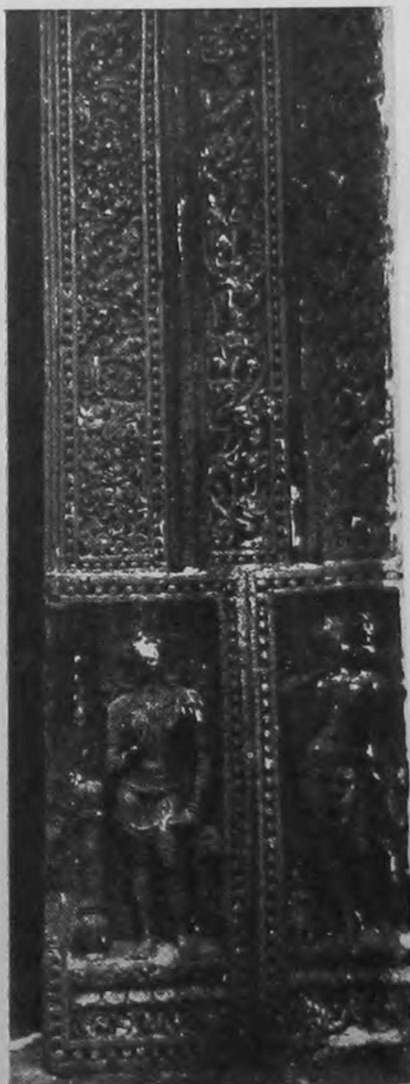
Interior of the shrine (*maṇḍapa*) in the Narsinghnath Temple
(Dist. Sambalpur) with modern terrazzo-work and tiles ;
the corbelled ceiling is whitewashed stone.
The four pillars date back to about 600-650 A.D.
and are probably Buddhist work.

PLATE XVIII (a)



One of the four pillars supporting the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* Narsinghnath Temple (Cp. previous plate). Reddish-brown sand-stone. Mannerist art, about 600-650 A. D.

PLATE XVIII (b)



Lower portion of the carved black-stone door frame, right jamb, South door of the Narsinghnath Temple, *Dvārapāla* (door guard) on left, river goddess on the right.

11th Century work.

PLATE XIX

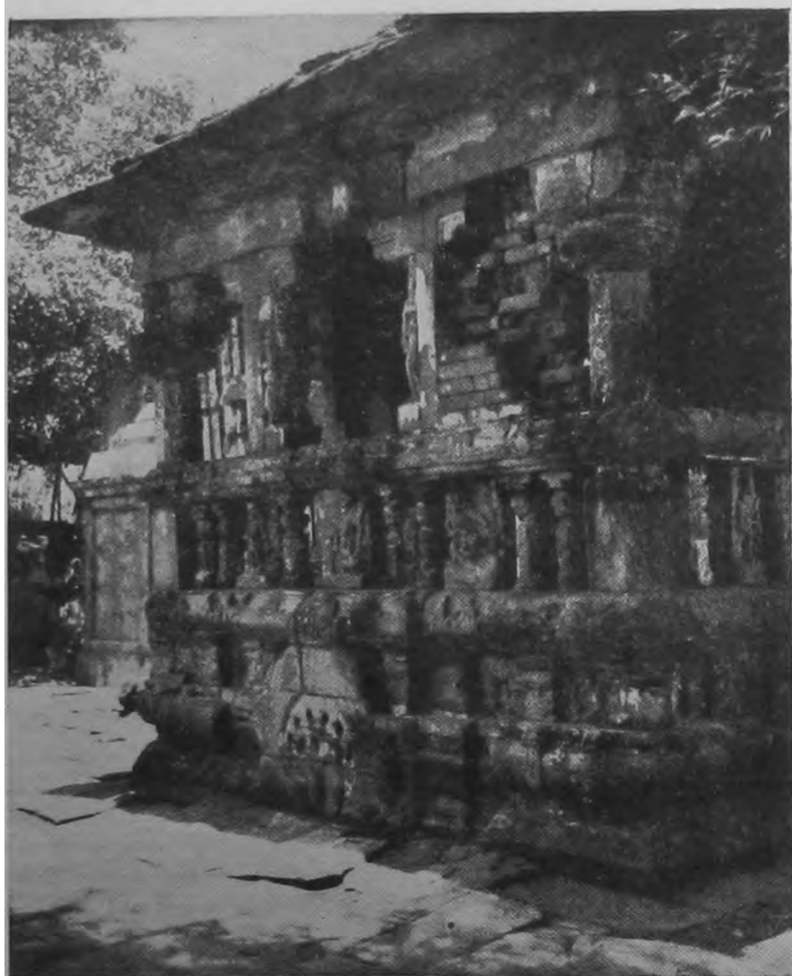


Large pillared hall of stone at Kupari District, Balasoré Subdivision Sadar.
Presumably Buddhist.
(The Clay horse whose head is seen against
the second pillar from the right is a modern votive image.)



The Kosaleśvara Temple, Baidyanath, near Sonepur.
On left, entrance showing original Buddhist brick masonary ;
On right, additional stone verandah of the 6th Century A.D.

PLATE XXI



Verandah (or balcony) of stone, added by Hindus to the original Buddhist brickwork temple, Kosaleśvara Temple, Baidyanath.

PLATE XXII

Sundarī (belle) looking into a mirror,
Sixth Century Sculpture in
the verandah of the
Kosaleśvara Temple,
Baidyanath.
Cream coloured sandstone.



PLATE XXIII

Kārttikeya.
Pale Yellow Sandstone.
Inside door jamb of entrance to
Kosaleśvara Temple Baidyanath.
Observe "wig" style head-dress.
6th Century A.D.

PLATE XXIV

Mother and Child.
Sand-stone sculpture inside the Kosaleśvara Temple, Baidyanath,



PLATE XXV

Lovers. Sculpture datable to the 6th Century in the Kosaleśvara Temple, Baidyanath, near Sonepur. The halo suggests a divinity; the tender pose—the male holding the girl's foot in his palm-suggests human lovers.



PLATE XXVI

The Buddha in the gesture of gift ; with an umbrella-holder and floating garland-bearers among other figures. Fixed in the wall of a modern shrine at Achitrajpur, near Banpur, built on a mound of Buddhist remains.
Date 550-650 A.D.

PLATE XXVII

Blackstone image of Tārā, found at Achitrajpur, near Banpur, and now lodged in a School adjoining the Buddhist mound.
9th-10th Century A.D.



PLATE XXVII (a)



The Great Stūpa of Ratnagiri, made of brick and surrounded by over a hundred votive and funereal stūpas, mostly of stone, some of brick.

PLATE XXVIII



Ratnagiri : A few of the votive stūpas standing next to the Great Stūpa. The superbly finished brick-work of the latter is clearly seen in the background.

PLATE XXIX

Ratnagiri Mahāvihāra : Part of the quadrangle, with the colossal Buddha seen in a cell on the right. Part of the upper storey can be seen (in ruins).

PLATE XXX



The entrance to the Ratnagiri Mahā-vihāra.
The stone revetment covers a brick wall. The goddess Lakshmi appears on the lintel.
The two bottom panels may represent royal donors.
Across the monastic quadrangle the colossal Buddha can be seen.

PLATE XXXI

The Goddess Yamunā.
One of the relief sculptures on the left side of the entrance, Ratnagiri Mahā-vihāra.

PLATE XXXII

The main cult image in the Great Monastery at Ratnagiri: the colossal Buddha seated in the earth-touching attitude. A late and lifeless work of no merit.

PLATE XXXIII



One of the two figures flanking the colossal Buddha seen in the previous plate: The Bodhisattva Padmapāni, holding a lotus and a formidable looking flywhisk. Sandstone. Observe the fine brickwork.

PLATE XXXIV



A four-armed Bodhisattva with a Dhyāni Buddha in elaborate hairdress and attendant figures.
By the master of the Padmapāni (previous plate).
11th Century work.

PLATE XXXV

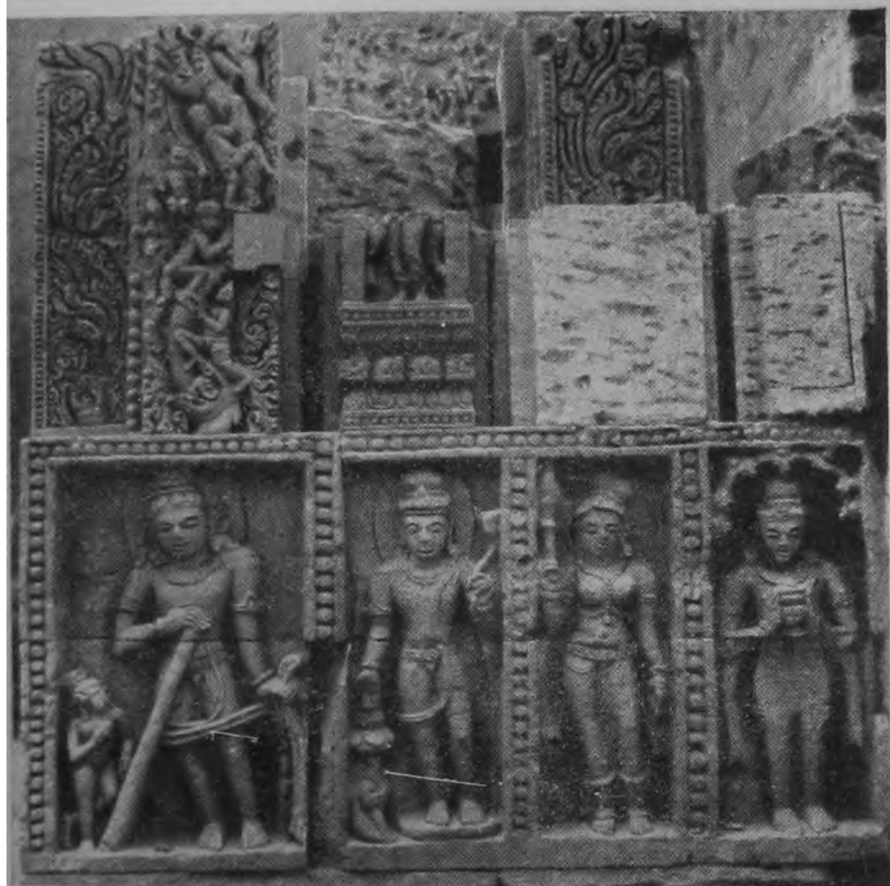


The Buddha calling the Earth to witness.
Sandstone.
Ratnagiri Monastery.



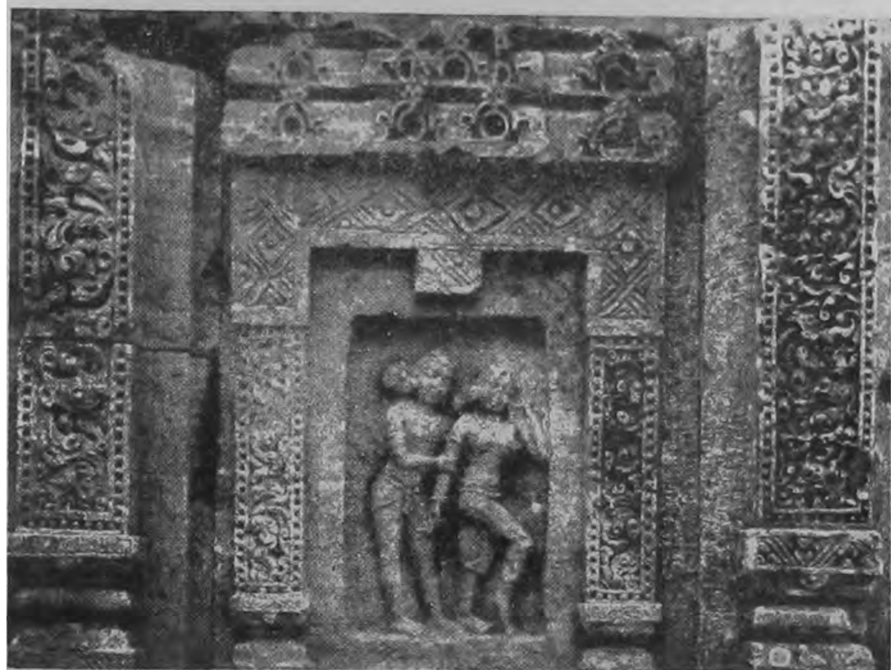
Left-side jamb of carved sandstone door frame leading to the shrine of the colossal Buddha, (Cp. next two plates). Left to right : Serpant king girl, with fly whisk, the Bodhisattva Padmapāni and a Door Guard.

PLATE XXXVII



The bottom portion of the right hand jamb of the doorway in front of the main shrine, Ratnagiri, (Cp. previous plate). Left to right : Dvārapāla, Bodhisattva Padmapāni, woman *chaurī* bearer, Serpent King with gift.

PLATE XXXVIII



Loving Couple.
A panel from a late
period at Ratnagiri,
evidently contemporary with the
Mukteśvara, about 850-900 A.D.



From the end of an ornate stone beam at Ratnagiri. Orissi dancer in characteristic pose (*adavu*) and the right hand in the *paṭāka-hasta* gesture. The flying scarf suggests lively dancing movement.

PLATE XL



The Buddha in the earth-touching attitude ; seated on a lion throne, with two attendant Bodhisattvas and two Dhyāni Buddhas above. Baroque, about end of 8th Century. Ratnagiri Great Monastery. Cp. next plate.



PLATE XLI

A Ratnagiri Buddha of the period of decline : A lifeless, ill-proportioned poorly composed image of the 11th century or later. Badly carved attendants and an ill-favoured worshipper. Cp. plates XXXV and XL.



PLATE XLII

From the outer wall
of the Ratnagiri Mahā-vihāra :
Jhambala, god of the Eight Precious
Substances. An unpleasant looking
image with monstrous hands and vast
legs, covered with jewellery.
11th—12th Century work.

PLATE XLIII



A goddess
with a sheaf of
corn (?), Ratnagiri.
Elements of old skill not
absent, though dominated
by formalism. Wrists too
fat, but bust and head-dress
well carved.
9th Century A.D.



Ratnagiri, near Cuttack.
Image of a goddess found in the Great Vihāra.
A most expressive and original head of the early baroque period, about 700 A.D.

PLATE XLV



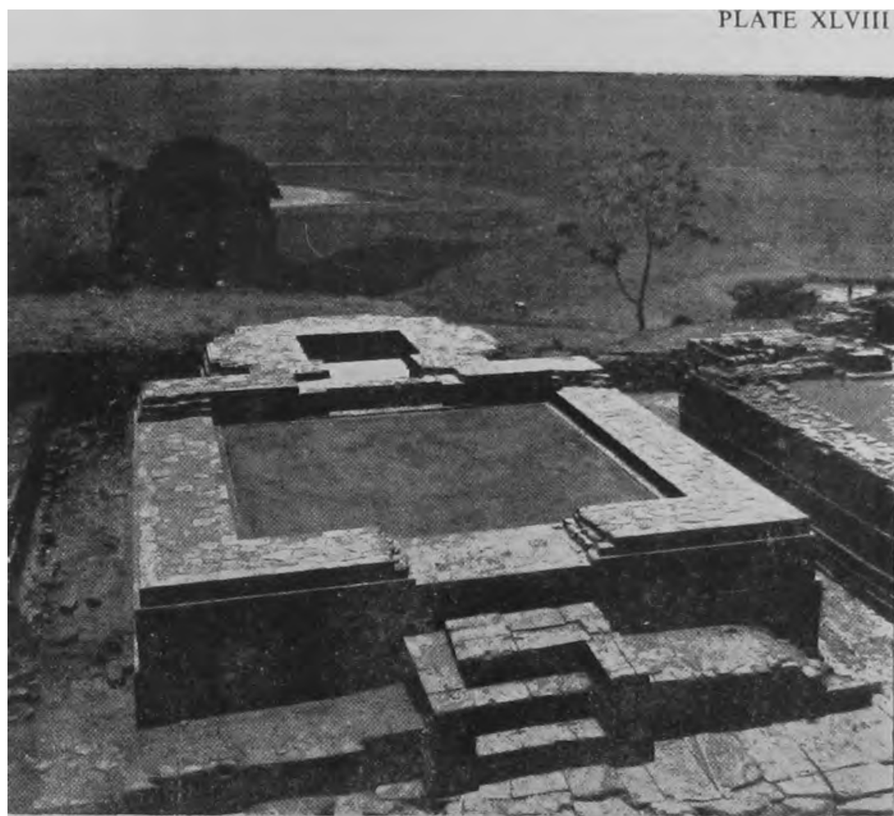
The main cult image in Monastery No. 2, Ratnagiri. Made of coarse and porous stone, it continues elements of old tradition, such as the "wet garment", but is of much later date and lacks life.



A Bodhisattva in the pose of meditation
(*dhyāni*) found in Monastery No. 4.
A haughty face, with rich additional
figures round the main image.
About 850—900 A.D.
Observe the votive stūpas behind.



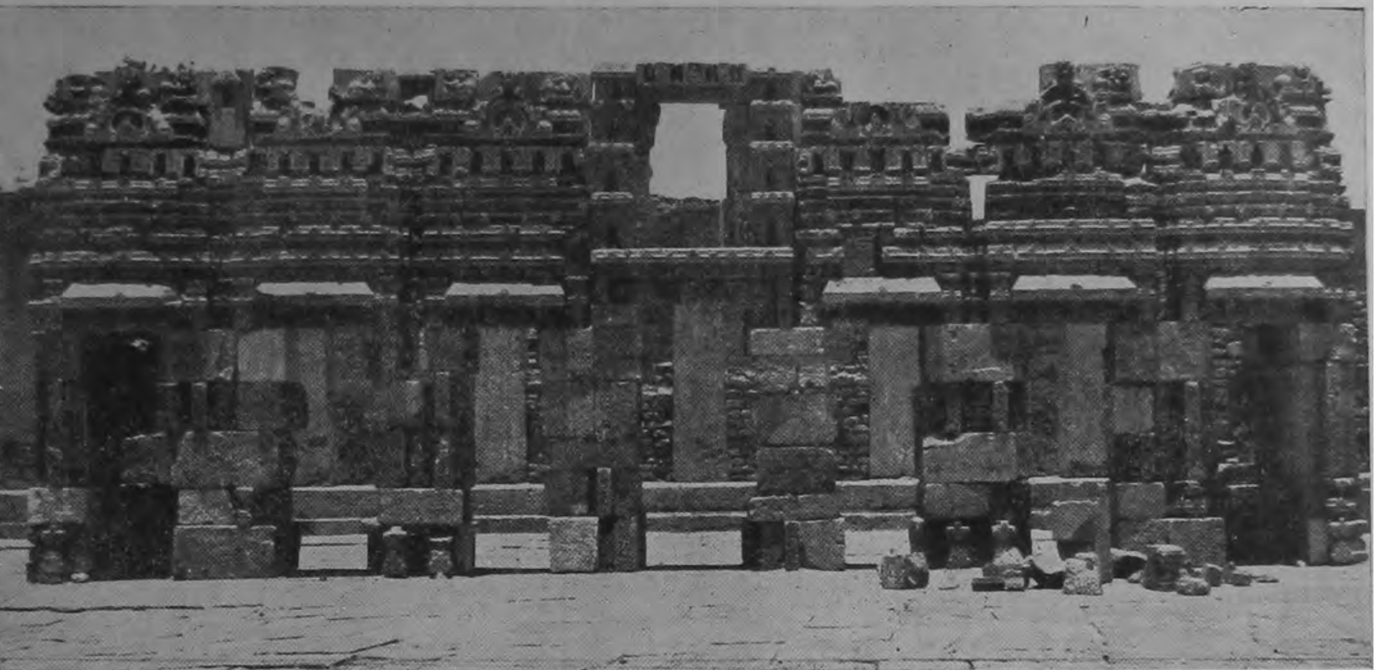
Stone arch near entrance cell supporting upper storey (visible on top), Ratnagiri Mahā-vihāra.
This is a true arch with voussoirs and key stone.



Ratnagiri :

Foundations of an all-stone temple to the right of the Great Monastery. Observe the use of dowels in the steps. Tentative date : 8th or 9th Century. The plains under the hill are seen in the background

PLATE XLIX



Reconstructed facade now put together in the monastic quadrangle at Ratnagiri : a late period stone wall with a door and six niches in front.



Detail from the carved stone wall shown in previous plate, from the "window" above the central entrance : a Buddha-figure in the gesture of granting a boon, outside a hut that might have been used for oil-lamps.



A Lokeśvara statue from Badagada, Bhubaneshwar,
now in the State Museum, Bhubaneshwar.
Hard grey stone.
Height 135 Cm.
A superbly finished image from the end
of the 10th Century.



Torso in the Orissa State Museum at Bhubaneshwar, supposed to be Vishṇu, but here identified as a Lokeśvara image. Only slightly later than the Lokeśvara in the previous plate, perhaps 1050 A.D.



Colossal torso of Lokešvara, Bhubaneshwar, State Museum.
Found at Tharapada, Bhubaneshwar.
Height 1m 78cm.
Contemporary with the two previous images.
Yellowish red sandstone.



Buddhist image now in the garden of the
Fakir Mohan College, Balasore.
Colossal, probably Lokeśvara.
Possibly a little later than
the previous two images.
Provenance (reputedly), Kasba.



A portion of the Nandi maṇḍapa of the Kosaleśvara temple at Patnagarh, near Bolangir.
Ancient Buddhist pillars incorporated in a modern structure.



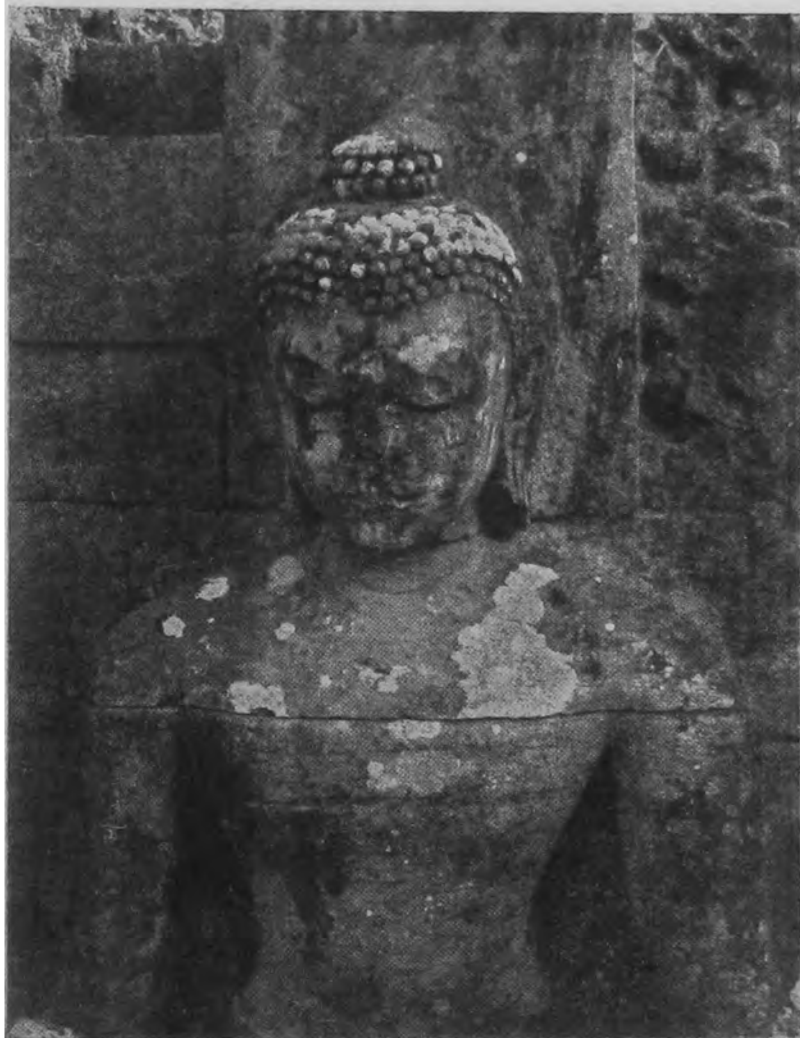
Patnagarh, some 37 Km from Bolangir.

One of the many Buddhist statues now housed is a modern Śiva shrine: a woman removing her last garment.

Behind : late Buddhist period pillar.



From the Khiching Museum :
The Buddha under the *ashvattha* tree,
calling the Earth to witness.
A work of great decorative perfection and superb finish.
From Itamunda village, Mayurbhanj,



A colossal Buddha image of the late period, at Udayagiri, near Ratnagiri (Cuttack).

PLATE LIX



Ashta-mahā-bayā Tārā : protectress against the eight great perils :
Shipwreck (left bottom), highwaymen(left middle),
fire (right bottom), etc. Ratnagiri.
Life size, Surface find.
Observe other surface finds in the background.



The Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi.
Poor quality, late work from Vajragiri village, off the Cuttack-Jaipur road. Now in the State Museum, Bhubaneshwar.



The goddess Tārā, at Ajudhya, near Balasore. A splendid example of baroque art at its best.



The Avalokiteśvara Padmapāni image on the
Lalitagiri hill, not far from the
Ratnagiri monastery.
A fine example of early 9th century Mahāyanā
Buddhist sculpture of great elegance and sensitivity.

PLATE LXIII



Hirapur Yoginī Temple :
One of nine sculptured
panels on the outside facade :
a nymph with an umbrella holder,
with a cup of wine (?) in her hand.
Below a mask with a "Mona Lisa" smile and
two animals. A masterpiece of graceful baroque.
(The white patches are modern plaster repairs).



The Hirapur shrine. View from outside, with four of the nine niches, visible The arch visible behind the circular wall is modern repair.

PLATE LXV

The Temple of the 64 yoginīs, Hirapur. View of the interior with eleven images of the 64 yoginīs; the "arena" where the Śakti sect celebrated its orgies.



PLATE LXVI

Hirapur : The head of one of the 64 Yogīṇīs, showing the exquisite workmanship, the "Leonardesque" smile, and the elaborate diadem and head-dress. (*Photo : Archealogical Survey of India*)



PLATE LXVII

Hirapur :

A Yogīṇī shooting an arrow, standing in a vigorous movement. A rat or a hog below. Tentatively identified with Vīra-kumārī or Vira-kaumārī of the texts.

PLATE LXVIII

No 64

Hirapur :

Yoginī dancing between two lotus stalks.

Vehicle : Stag or antelope.

Perhaps the Yoginī Vāyuvenā.

PLATE LXIX



Hirapur :

Girl tying on anklet or ankle-bells. The vehicle is perhaps a hog or rat (?)

No 21

PLATE LXX



Hirapur :

Demoniac-looking
Yoginī standing on a stag (?).
The figure has four arms, a highly
ornate loin-cloth, and plenty of jewellery.

No 62

PLATE LXXI



Hirapur :

The Lady of the Waters :
A Yoginī standing on waves — one
of the finest sculptures from the shrine.

No 23

PLATE LXXII



Hirapur :

The Yoginī in a skirt
made of peacock feathers,
standing on a double lotus.
Perhaps the Yoginī Mānandā ?

No 5

PLATE LXXIII



The Yoginī with the parrot :
a Leonardesque face with a smile
and a beautifully carved body. Temple
of the 64 Yoginīs, Hirapur, District Puri.
This is perhaps the Yoginī Abheravardhinī.

PLATE LXXIV



Hirapur :
The Yoginī Śaṇḍinī (?) standing under a tree
(like a yakshinī) and on a male ass.
The doorway of the shrine is seen on the right.

PLATE LXXV

Hirapur :

A Goddess with a wild boar as *vāhana*. Almost certainly the Yoginī Varāhī, one of the Seven Mothers.



13



PLATE LXXVI

Hirapur :

One of the 64 Yoginis standing on a low stool. (with, zoomorphic legs ?)

PLATE LXXVII



Ranipur—Jharial : View of circular temple of 64 Yoginīs with entrance, behind which is the Śiva Shrine, and the right a minature Orissan style śikhara temple with *amalaka* on top.

PLATE LXXVIII

Ranipur—Jharial : One of the two small shrines on the two sides of the entrance to the 64 Yoginī temple : a Dravidian style, barrel-vault roofed miniature temple on the left on the dooway.

PLATE LXXIX



Ranipur-Jharial : Inside view of shrine of 64 Yoginīs with the Śiva-*maṇḍapa* partly seen on the left.

PLATE LXXX

Ranipur-Jharial : The four-pillared little *maṇḍapa* in the centre of the arena, showing Śiva dancing with his feet on Ganesha and Nandi; he has six arms, three heads.

PLATE LXXXI



Ranipur-Jharial : One of the best preserved goddesses in the Temple of the 64 Yoginīs. Three-headed, four-armed, one holding a thunderbolt. Possibly Brahmāṇī ?

PLATE LXXXII



Ranipur-Jharial : One of the 64 dancing Yoginīs with monstrously carved feet, holding a thunderbolt.

PLATE LXXXIII



Ranipur-Jharial : Yoginī with four arms, lower left hand pointing to *pudendu*—probably a fertility gesture.

PLATE LXXXIV



Ranipur-Jharial : Perhaps Indrāṇī, one of the Seven Mothers, or the Yoginī Dhaḍharī or the Yoginī Eṅginī : an elephant-headed goddess.

PLATE LXXXV



Ranipur-Jharial : Three Yoginīs with animal heads, all three with four arms, all in the same posture.

PLATE LXXXVI



One of the earliest single-cell temples of Bhubaneshwar : the Lakshmaṇeśvara (in the Śatrughneśvara group). Elephant frieze over door, dvārapālas on door jambs.

PLATE
LXXXVII



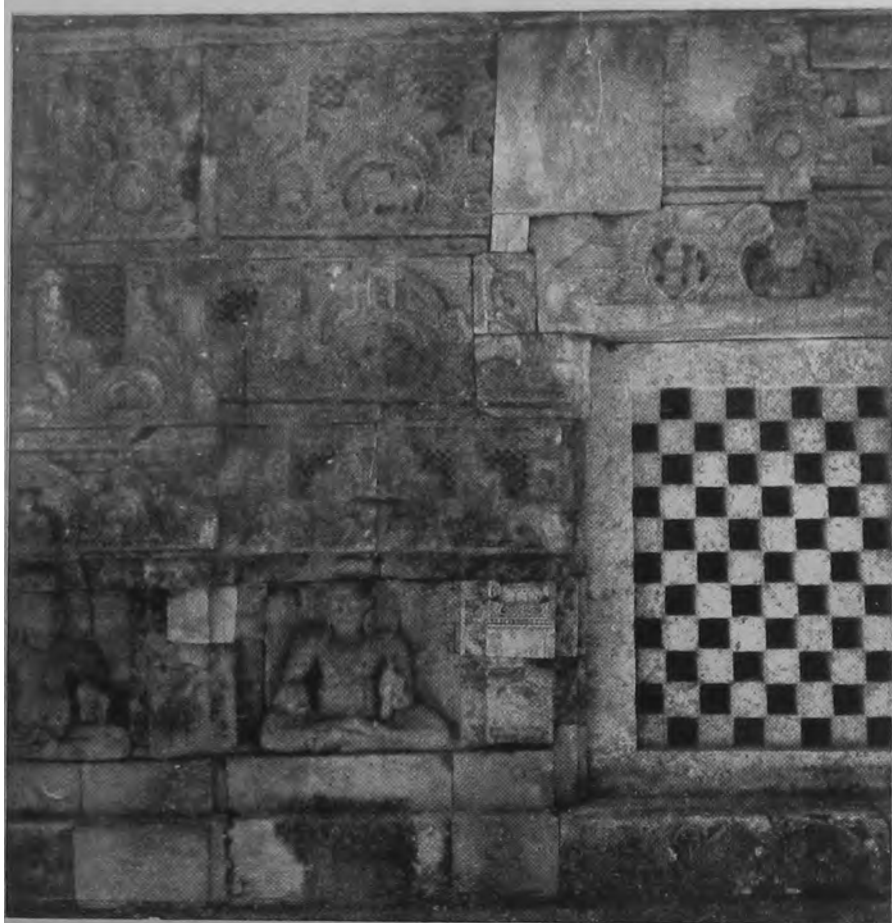
The Bhārateśvara temple, one of early single-cell shrines of Bhubaneshwar. In centre : Śiva and Pārvatī ; on both flanks : *sundarīs* (belles), and two miniature shrines, all on the lintel. Door guardians at the base of jambs.



PLATE
LXXXVIII

The Paraśurāmeśvara Temple at Bhubaneshwar, showing the pillared *maṇḍapa* with a clerestory roof of two rows of stone slabs.
(*Photo, by courtesy of Dr. M. Mansinha*)

PLATE LXXXIX



A portion of the wall decoration of the *jagamohana* of the Paraśurāma Temple, Bhubaneshwar.

PLATE
XC

Loving couple from the *jagamohana* of the Paraśurāmeśvara Temple :
"Wig-like" hairdress.



PLATE
XCI

Women taking off her lower garment ; naked loving couple, the man with "wig" hairdress.
From the wall of the *jagamohana*, Paras'urāmeśvara Temple.

PLATE XCII



Door guard with "wig-like" hair curls, holding a broad sword, and with an Indonesian *Kris* in his belt.
Paras'urāmes'vara Temple, Bhubaneshwar.

PLATE XCIII

Bottom portion of facade, Paras'urāmeśvara tower.
Kārttikeya with his peacock ; Marriage of Śiva and Pāravatī on lintel.
Flying *gandharvas* (left unfinished), belles and loving couples, well-spaced mannerist ornamentation.



Upper portion of the facade, Paras'urāmeśvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar (continuation of the above portion seen in the previous plate), showing Lakulīśa with the rod, and an even more Buddhist-looking figure higher up.

PLATE XCV

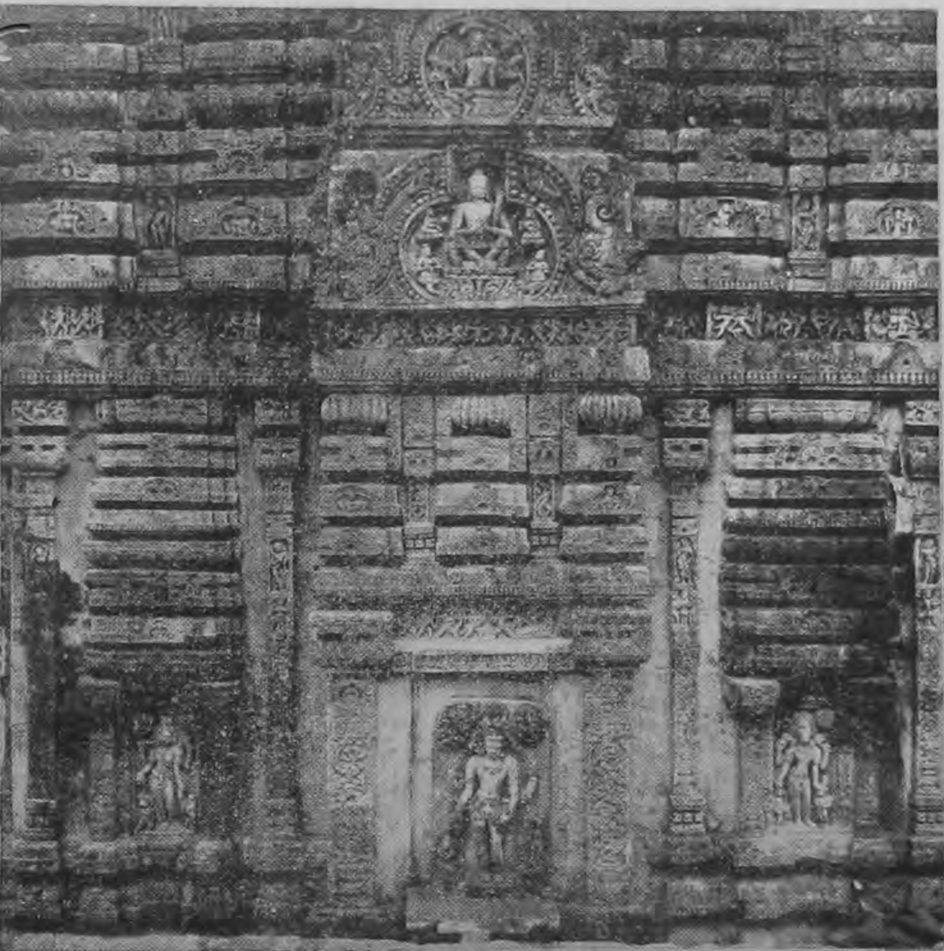


One of the surviving niches of the ruined Svarṇajāleśvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar.
Typical Buddhist work with elegant mannerist pilasters, and other areas left unadorned.

PLATE XCVI



General view of the Siṁhanātha Temple of the Island: The three-tiered flat roof of the prayer-hall, with perforated window in the centre.
Second half of the 7th Century.



Facade of the temple tower, Siṁhanātha of the Island.
Kārttikeya below, Lakulīśa in the horse-shoe window above.
Part of the Mahābhārata frieze is also seen.

PLATE XCVIII



Erotic scene from the prayer-hall, Siṁhanātha Temple, near Baramba. Primitive sculpture of the early period.

PLATE XCIX

Siṁhanātha Temple of the Island : main entrance, with portion of Mahābhārata frieze under roof slab, Gaja-Lakshmī over door, elaborate *laṭā* (creeper) ornaments, and a Nandi bull in front.



PLATE
C

The goddess Yamunā :
a panel on the *jagamohana* of the Simhanātha Temple of the Island, framed by Buddhistic pilasters and lotus ornaments.
Rich crowding, poor hands and feet, clumsy mannerist work.

PLATE
CI

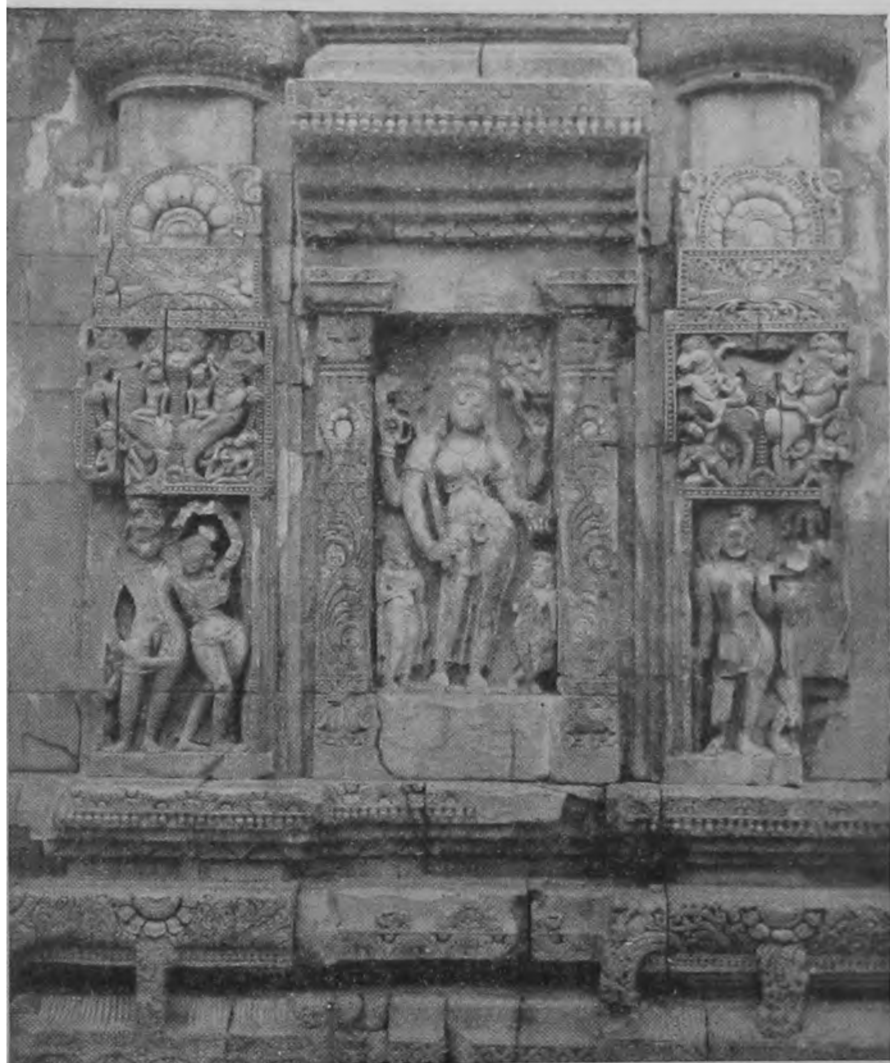


S'āla-bhañjikā, belle bending a branch of a tree :
a sculptured panel from the wall of the Simhanātha Temple.
Second half of the 7th Century A.D.

PLATE CII



The Baitāl Deul of Bhubaneshwar. A unique temple with barrel roofed tower to which is attached a small prayer-hall with a two-slabbed clerestory roof.



Portion of the face, Baitāl Temple. Pārvatī in a lovely mannerist pose, flanked by sharply cut pilasters. Loving couples in side niches. Addorses composite animals with riders, half-lotus ornaments, and the stepped tower (*zikkurat*) motif above the goddess, all showing Buddhist elements.



PLATE
CIV

Baitāl Deul, Bhubaneshwar: Durgā Killing the Buffalo Demon; a superbly carved couple in classic style, the niche crowned by decorative device with *makara* head and addorsed monsters with riders.
Date : around 600 A.D.

PLATE
CV

Part of the wall of the Baitāl *vimāna* (sanctum), showing excellent organisation of space, with splendidly carved mannerist figures in niches—no overcrowding. Great similarity to Buddhist work at Ratnagiri.

PLATE CVI



One of the three shrines, set at the corners of a triangle, consisting only of a tower sanctum each, at Baudh. 8th Century.

The twin temples of Gandharādi, District Phulbani.
The Nīlamādhava on the right and the Siddhes'vara on the left.
Flat-roofed jagamohana with signs of a third roof slab on top.
All the sculpture is missing.

PLATE CVII

PLATE CVIII



The Muktes'vara Temple, Bubaneshwar. Earliest fully baroque building, with first many-slabbed jagamohana roof (pīḍhā-deul), still crowned by a vase pinnacle.

The rich baroque facade of the Muktes'vara, full of arabesques, geometric and floral ornaments and lovely seductive women in sinuous poses. About 900 A. D.

PLATE CIX

PLATE CX

The Gateway (toraṇa) in front of the Muktes'vara Temple, Bhubaneshwar. Rich baroque decoration with reclining women on the arch.

PLATE CXI



Mukteśvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar. Belle waiting for her lover at the door, with parrot repeating words of endearment learned when the lover came last time.

PLATE CXII



A belle (sundarī), one of many on the Muktes'vara Temple, Bhubaneshwar. Typical baroque work, with most sensual treatment, a lovely, smiling face, and highly ornate scroll-work above.

The Rājarāni Temple of Bhubaneshwar, built about 1000 A.D. The perfect baroque temple of exquisite projections and with admirable sculptural ornamentation on the Sanctum.

PLATE CXIII



Portion of the wall of the Rājarāni, showing (left) Varuṇa, a belle (middle) and numerous female figures of exquisite grace, growing as it were out of a background of an Enchanted Forest—creepers, foliage, floral ornaments and pattern.

PLATE CXV



One of the most exquisite female figures on the Rājarāni, Bhubaneshwer : a smiling dryad holding a branch of a tree, standing on a lotus.

PLATE CXVI



One of the wood-nymphs on the Rājarāni : typical baroque work, surrounded by exuberant ornamentation, standing on a fantastic water-lily, in a tense posture.

PLATE CXVII



The belle with the peacock pecking at her frontal jewel : a much contorted belle under a tree, with sensually carved breasts, in a highly artificial pose, the Rājarāni Temple, Bhubaneshwar.

PLATE CXVIII



The Brahmes'vara Temple of Bhubaneshwar, contemporary with the Rājarāni, about 100-1050 A. D. but with four corner-shrines within the compound.

PLATE CXIX

Portion of the facade of the Brahmes'vara, Bhubaneshwar, showing division into architectural compartments, niches with figures and groups. About 1050 A. D.

PLATE
CXX



The Mādhava Temple in Village Madhaba near Bhubaneshwar. All 11th Century Temple of splendid proportions, now badly 'restored' with cement.

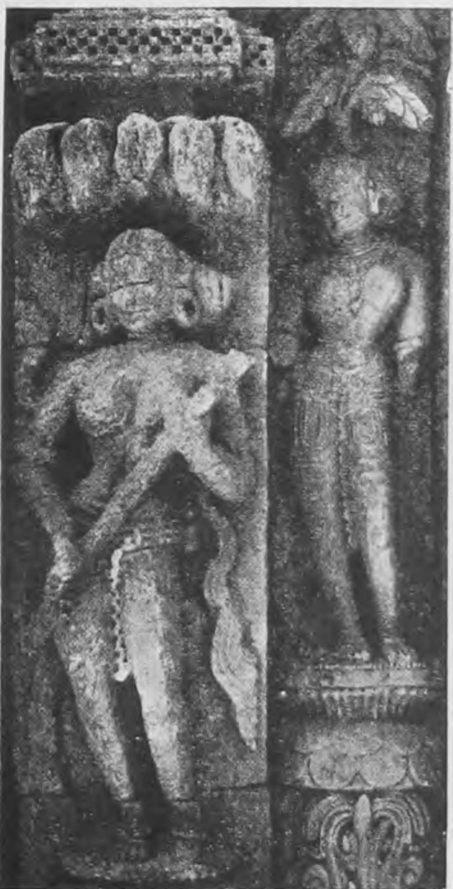
A Portion of the facade of the Mādhava Temple at Madhaba village, showing niches and compartments with figures in the manner of the Brahmeśvara Temple.

PLATE CXXI

PLATE CXXII

Detail from the relievo ornamentation on the Mādhava Temple ; with a girl holding a fly-whisk in the centre. 11th Century work.

PLATE CXXIII



A Vīṇā Player and a belle under a tree : Detail from the sculptural work on the Mādhava Temple.

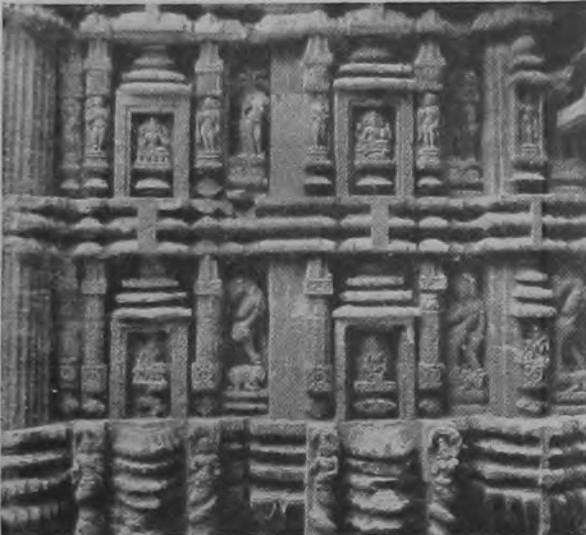


PLATE
CXXIV

Dakshaprajāpati Temple, Banpur, District Puri. Part of facade with temple-niches, divinities, serpent-maids, belles etc. Probably 12th Century work.

PLATE
CXXV



The two original (12th Century) elements of the Liṅgarāja, Bhubaneshwar : the tower (about 180feet high) and the prayer-hall, seen from the compound among late additions.

PLATE
CXXVI

A portion of the Liṅgarāja wall showing floral and geometric arabesques, niches with divinities and loving couples.

PLATE
CXXVII



Liṅgarāja, Bhubaneshwar : Continuation of lower portion of the wall shown in the previous Plate.

PLATE
CXXVIII

South entrance (formerly a window) of the prayer-hall, Liṅgarāja with three temple towers depicted above the lintel, flanked by four female figures.
About 1060 A. D.



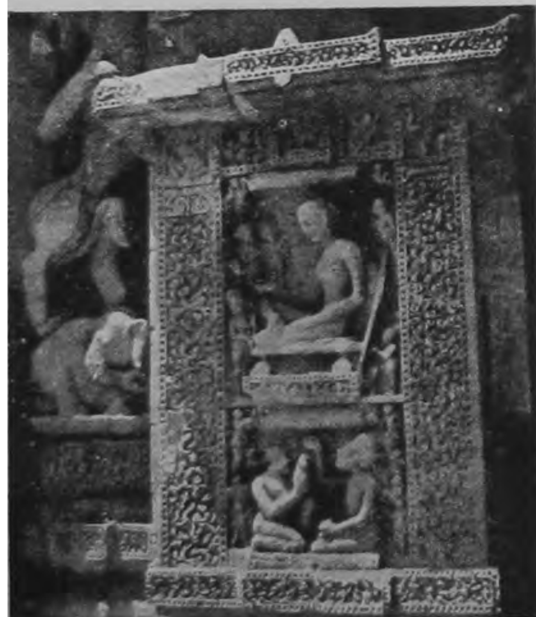


PLATE
CXXIX

A panel from the wall of the Liṅgarāja : holy men preaching ; with a superb floral framework.

PLATE CXXX



Yama, Guardian God of the South, and God of Death. From the south wall of the Liṅgarāja, Bhubaneshwar.

PLATE CXXXI



Pārvatī, one of the pārs'va-devatās on the Liṅgarāja Temple. Blue chlorite, probably later work.

PLATE CXXXII



Two beautiful "idling girls" from the Liṅgarāja Temple, Bhubaneshwar. About 1060 A. D.

PLATE CXXXIII

From the Liṅgarāja, Bhubaneshwar: the girl undressed by a monkey, and a boldly stepping tree maiden (vṛīkshakā). Two figures from the jagamohana.

PLATE
CXXXIV



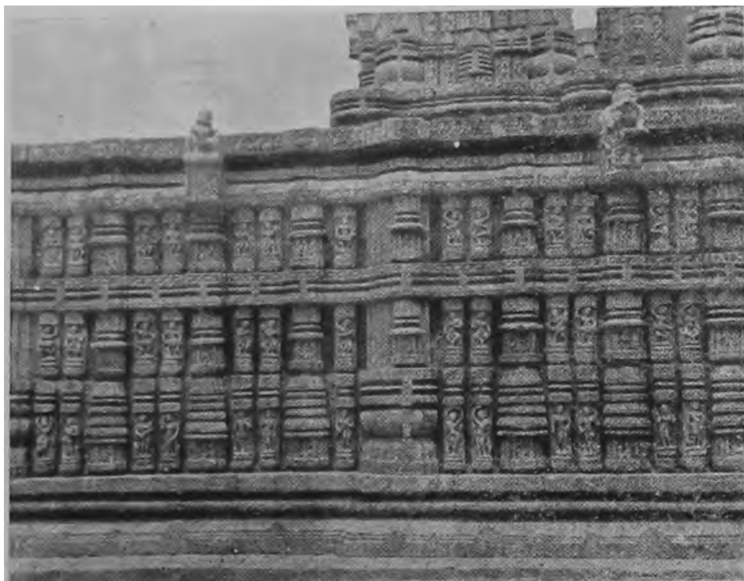
The Pārvatī Temple, within the precints of the Liṅgarāja, showing window of jagamohana with five upright bars, each with a caryatid belle. About 1100 A. D.

PLATE
CXXXV



Konarka : ruined portion of the Sanctum (with the collapsed spire) on the right ; in the centre the prayer-ha ll (jagamohana), with the chariot wheels visible; on the left a small portion of the hall of dance.

PLATE CXXXVI



Konarka : portion of the nāṭya-maṇḍapa, with dancing girls in Orissi dance poses, musician girls etc.

PLATE CXXXVII



Portion of the nāṭya-maṇḍir of Konarka, showing dancing girls, musicians, and (top row, right) two naked monks.

The monk, the priest and the dryad : detail from the pillar of the Konarka dance hall.

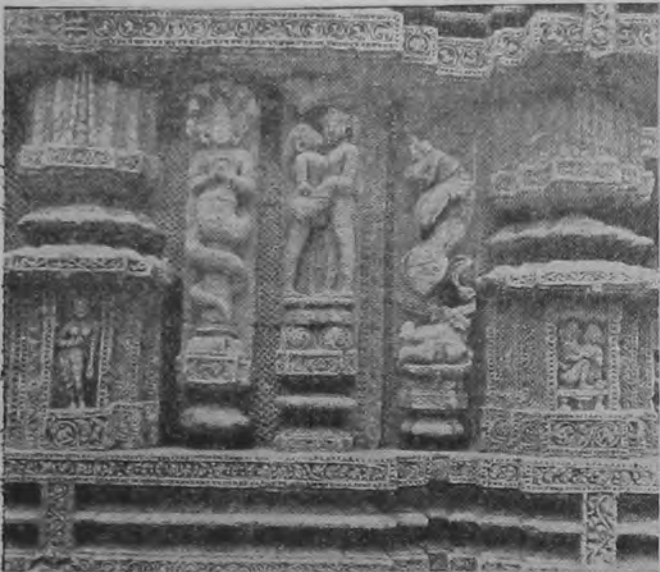
PLATE CXXXVIII

PLATE CXXXIX



Konarka, jagamohana wall: one of the wheels; (upper ribbon of sculptures) erotic scenes, darbar scenes; (lower ribbon) erotic scenes, nāgas, nāginīs, dryads, (bottom ribbon) elephant procession.

PLATE
CXL



From the lower wall of the prayer-hall : loving couples, serpent king, composite animal, a belle (sundarī) in a niche.

PLATE
CXLI

Portion of the jagamohana wall : kissing lovers, serpent king and queen, amorous couple in a niche (left), and a curd-seller carrying a pole on his shoulder with two pots.

PLATE CXLII



From the first parapet of the Konarka prayer-hall : celestial musician girl playing cymbals. Over life-size.

PLATE CXLIII

From the top of the prayer-hall : amorous couple kissing. Life-size.

PLATE CXLIV

Konarka : Celestial musician on the edge of the parapet, playing the long drum (khol).

PLATE CXLV



Heavenly musician accompanying the Sun-god's course with cymbals. On the first roof of the Konarka temple.

PLATE CXLVI



Divine Musician girl playing a long flute. Free-standing sculpture on the parapet of the Konarka jagamohana.

PLATE CXLVII



Relievo figure on the Konarka roof, behind the celestial musician girls: nymph offering her breast.

PLATE CXLVIII



Standing, main cult image of Sūrya, the Sun-god, made of greenish, close-grained chlcrite stone: seven horses at the base. The god wears central Asian high boots. (Taken at Konarka before removal).

PLATE CXLIX

Konarka : Life-sized war-elephant carved of a single rock.

PLATE CL

Konarka : Over life-sized war-charger, trampling over defeated enemy. Monolithic.

PLATE CLI



From the Kapileśvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar. A carved and perforated window with masked dancers. Between 700 and 800 A. D.

PLATE CLII



A Mahāyāna Buddhist carving, perhaps Avalokites'vara, now worshipped as the Fish-Avatāra, and arms and fish-tail added in modern cement. From Ratnagiri, about 650-750 A. D.

PLATE CLIII



A Bodhisattva Padmapāṇi, now inserted in a modern temple on Landa Hill, from Lalitagiri. About 750 A. D. or later.

PLATE CLIV



Lalitagiri, near Cuttack. An old Buddhist image, probably Tārā Aparājitā, installed in a modern temple. The right arm is probably modern restoration. About 750 to 800 A. D.

PLATE CLV



The goddess Gaṅgā and Yamunā : two ancient images now incorporated in a modern temple, reconstructed mainly fıom ancient remains, Khiching, Mayurbhanj. About 9th Century work.

PLATE CLVI



Khiching, Mayurbhanj: the goddess Durgā defeating the Buffalo Demon. A 9th Century sculpture now embedded in a modern temple reconstructed mainly of old fragments. Observe the white plaster restorations and the iron rod under the shield.

PLATE CLVII



Image of a Jaina Tīrthaṅkara, standing in the open air in Ajudhya village, near Balasore, and worshipped by the Hindus. Height 4 ft. 6 in Probably 9th Century A. D.



Saintala, halfway between Bolangir and Titilagarh : modern temple erected partly of ancient carved stones. Inside : A Durgā and three *sundarī* images, also of the old temple. Perhaps 11th Century work.

PLATE CLIX



The Brick Temple at Ranipur-Jharial. View of the whole spire, with stone revetted entrance.

PLATE CLX

Detail from the brick temple of Ranipur-Jharial. The stone entrance is seen on the left. Carved brick decoration, windows and ornaments suggesting 10th century work.

PLATE CLXI



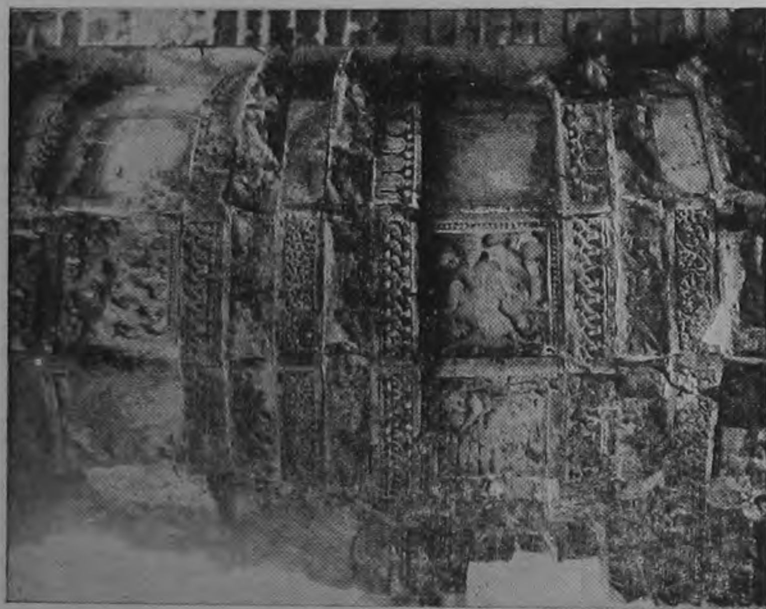
The Rasikarāya Temple at Haripada. Dist. Mayurbhanj, 14 miles from Baripada. Curvilinear roof; made entirely of moulded fired brickwork. traces of painting inside. Erected shortly after 1575.

PLATE CLXII



Entrance to the Rasikarāya brick temple, about 1575 A. D. at Haripura, Mayurbhanj.

PLATE CLXIII



A corner of the Rasikarāya temple at Haripura, showing moulded bricks with figures and ornaments. After 1575.

PLATE CLXIV

Detail from the Rasikarāya Temple of Haripura : moulded brick sculpture on the base, showing darbar scenes (bottom) and war, perhaps the Mahābhāratā war, in the middle row, all made of fired brickwork. A little after 1575 A. D.

PLATE CLXV



The wooden *maṇḍapa* (open pavilion) at the Kapileśvara Temple, Purushottamapura, District Ganjam : portion of the carved timber roof supported by corner pillars. The hut at the back is the priests' quarter.



PLATE
CLXVI

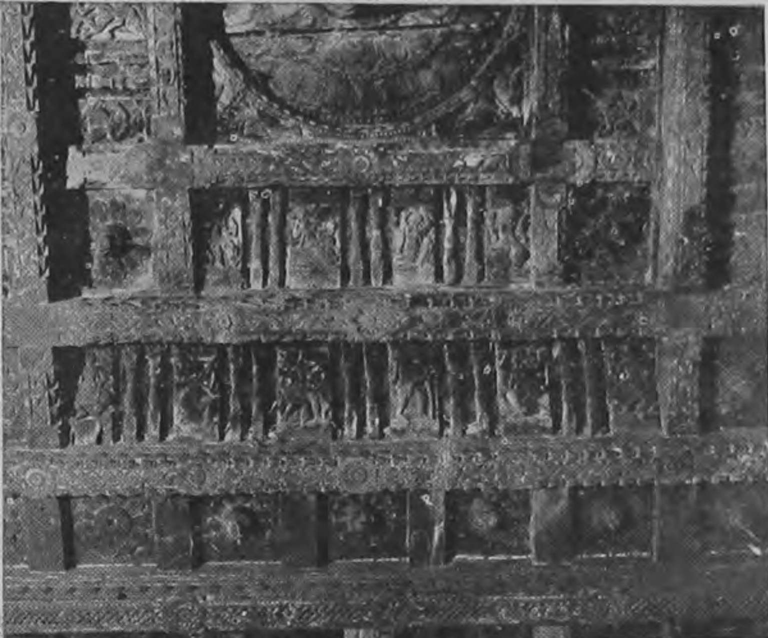
Detail of the carved timber roof of the temple at Purushottamapura, Ganjam district : a Lakshmī, a frieze of geese (haṅsas) and floral scroll work, with three divinities in the connecting upright panels.

PLATE
CLXVII



Detail from the timber roof of the Kapileśvara wooden pavilion, Purushottamapura, showing upright panels with Kṛishṇa, Rāma etc., and scroll work with lotus medaillons.

PLATE CLXVIII



Part of the timber ceiling of the Kapileśvara pavilion, Purushottamapura : decorative beams held together by up-right cross-panels each with one or more divine figure carved in relievo.

PLATE CLXIX



(a)



(b)

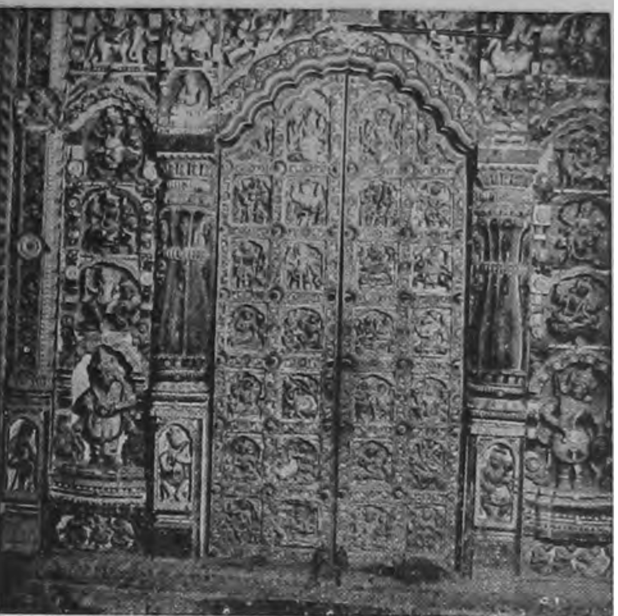
Details from the wooden pavilion at Purushottamapura (a) the lotus ceiling with the drop and (b) portion of a floral decoration with a stylized peacock and a lotus in medaillons.

PLATE CLXX

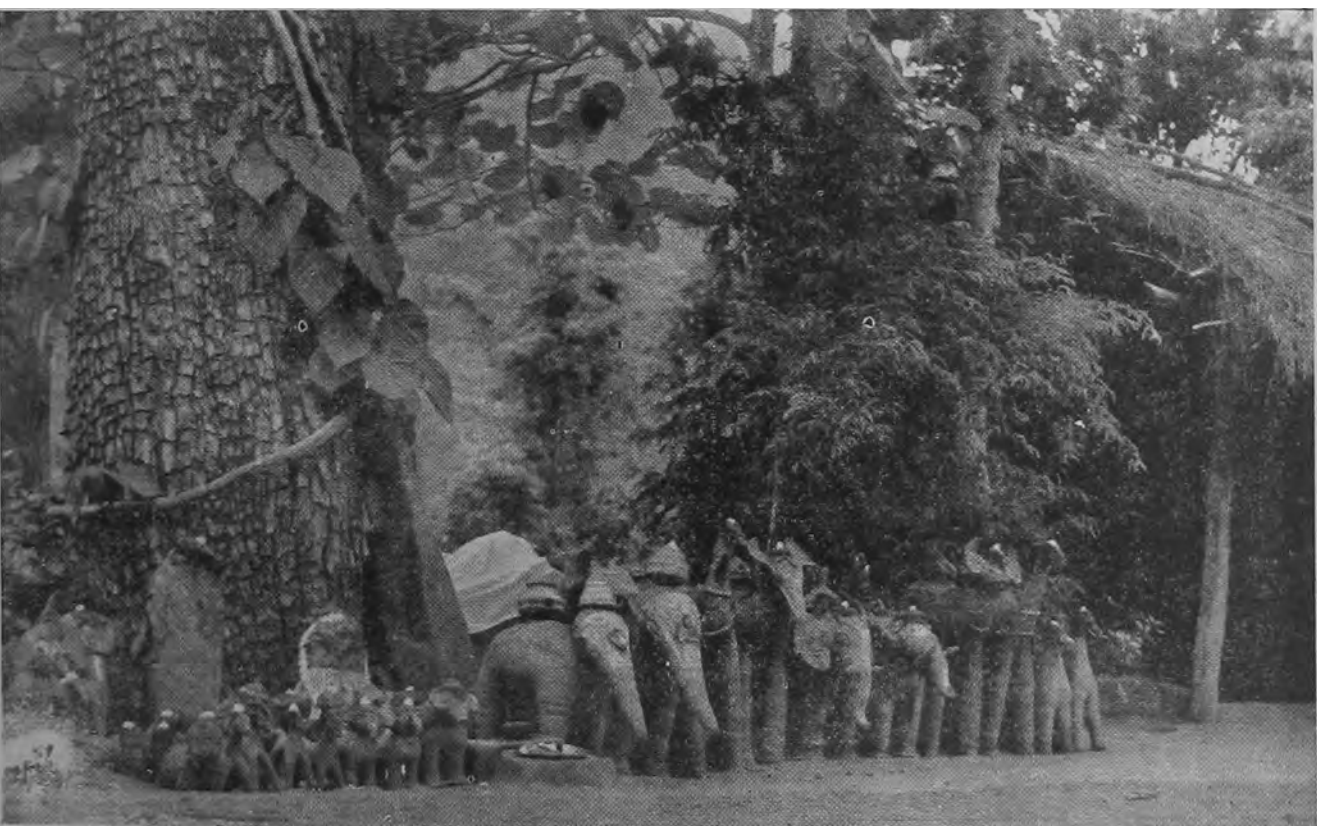


Buguda, near Aska and Bhanjanagar : the Viriñchi-Nārāyaṇa Temple, showing varandah with timber roof.

PLATE CLXXI



Entrance to the Sanctum of the Viriñchi-Nārāyaṇa Temple, Buguda : the entire wall as well as the leaves of the door made of carved wood. 19th Century, painted.



Votive offerings, terra-cotta horses and elephants, under the tree of the Mother Goddess : Duarseni village, Bangripusi, 24 miles from Baripada.

PLATE CLXXII

PLATE CLXXIII

Examples of terra-cotta horses and elephants (Thākurāṇīs) offered to the Mother Goddess. About 30 to 60 cm. high.

PLATE CLXXIV



Tomb of a Muslim Pīr (Saint) at Kantapara, District Puri, about 30 miles from Bhubaneswar, showing terra-cotta *ex-voto* horses on and around the grave.

PLATE
CLXXV



Five illustrated palm-leaves from a manuscript by Lokanātha Dāsa on Ushā-Parinaya, in the Raghunandan Library, Puri. Incized line-work done with a stylus. 18th Century or later.

PLATE CLXXVI



Four Pages of a palm-leaf manuscript of the Rāmāyaṇa from the collection of Pt. Sadashiv Rath Sharma, Puri. Incized illumination done with a stylus. The men wear Mughal coats, tight trousers and 'Marathi' turbans. 19th Century work.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Three paper-leaves from a Ms. of the *Gopā-līlā* in the Bhubaneshwar Museum : (*a*) Kṛishṇa steals the *gopīs'* dresses whilst they are beathing in the Yamunā river ; (*b*) three cowherds (*gopās*) and three milkmaids (*gopīs*) waiting for Kṛishṇa on the bank of the Yamunā ; (*c*) Eight milkmaids praying for the return of Kṛishṇa on the river bank.

PLATE CLXXVIII



(a)

(1)

(b)

(2)

Wooden cover-boards of manuscript books in the Ragunandan Library of Puri : (*a*) Kṛishṇa playing on his flute on the river bank with four milkmaids. (*b*) 1. Vishṇu Anantas'āyin (sleeping on the World Snake) ; 2. King and queen with attendants, receiving a messenger with animal head.

PLATE CLXXIX



(a)



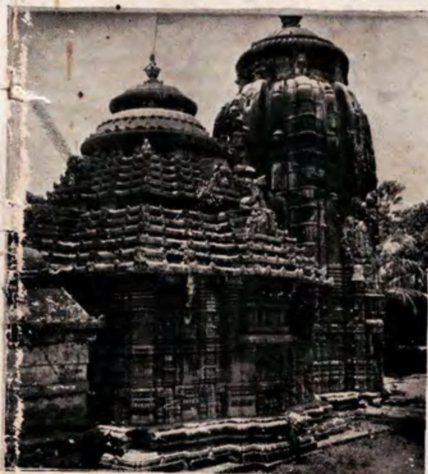
(b)

A wooden book-cover from the Raghunandan Library, Puri, and a palm-leaf with incized and tinted decoration : (*a*) Vishṇu with a royal worshipper on both sides, each with his queen. (*b*) A palm-leaf manuscript showing a warrior on a caparisoned charger fighting with his enemies among richly wooded country.

PLATE CLXXX



Wall painting from the temple of Vīriñchi-Nārāyaṇa, Buguda, near Aska : Rāma and Lakshmaṇa on a hill in a rocky landscape, receiving visitors, citizens, holy men and warriors, 19th Century mural.


HISTORY OF THE ART OF ORISSA



ORIENT LONGMAN
BOMBAY · CALCUTTA · MADRAS
NEW DELHI · BANGALORE · HYDERABAD